GEORGE ALBERT COE: THEORIST FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Twenty-five years later, one of the participants remembered the national conference on religious education in February, 1903, as an assembly of educational demi-gods. "Never," announced James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan, who presided over the six sessions of the convention, "has there been a gathering with higher and nobler aims than these." According to the call issued by William Rainey Harper, the purpose of the convention was to improve the religious and moral instruction of American youth, an instruction seen as woefully inadequate and imperfectly correlated with the new learning in history, literature, and the sciences. It was Harper's imperial mind, ranging in educational interest from the Chautauqua liberal arts program to the creation of a university center of graduate studies, from his scholarly publications in the Hebrew Old Testament to his teaching in the Hyde Park Baptist Sunday School, which conceived the idea of such a gathering and planned the program enlisting the talents of college presidents, deans, scholars, and ministers. As he brought Baptist piety and secular learning together to create the great University of Chicago eleven years before, he sought in this convention to bring together scholars, educators, and churchmen who could create new educational patterns

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for the local church school, the public school, the college, and the home.[1]

The four hundred participants, almost without exception, white, male, Anglo-Saxon Protestants,[2] joined in hymn and prayer before hearing the first evening's papers on the next steps in religious education. In his opening address Angell stressed that those present were already persuaded that psychological and pedagogical studies had contributed much to secular education and that the time had come to permit these studies to transform religious education as well. Intellectual advances in nearly every field had made thoughtful people aware that the new century was to be a time of transition. Although, as Angell noted judiciously, every period is a time of transition, the present transitional crisis was more portentous for religious education than any in nearly a century.

It was not merely that the new learning, emanating from the great universities like those over which Angell and Harper presided, was challenging the conventional and popular pieties of the Sunday School. It was the whole configuration of educational institutions which Protestants put together at the beginning of the nineteenth century which was being challenged by the literary and historical criticism of the Bible. After the Revolutionary War, and following the period of state disestablishment of churches, Protestants sought to find new forms for transmitting their religious faith across the generations. From 1805 to 1830, Protestants

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created a distinctive pattern of education. It was composed of institutions which had clear historical antecedents, but in their interrelationships and in the way they functioned in the broader American society of the nineteenth century, they represented something genuinely new in the history of education. The configuration included an American version of the English charity school, the Sunday School; the denominational college, narrower in sponsorship and aim than the colonial college; the truly innovative institution, the Protestant seminary, of which Andover (1818) was the pioneer; and the home.[3] The common school crusade of this same period, led by Protestant churchmen and lay reformers, won popular support for state supported and supervised public schools which were looked upon as a part of this larger educational ecology.[4] The public schools were given the responsibility for teaching the common core of Protestant doctrine and morality; the denominational college and seminary provided the instruction in what was distinctive in the variant Protestant traditions; and the home carried the chief responsibility for nurturing the sentiment and will on which all character was thought to be based. The Bible, the accepted standard of authority for all Protestants, was the key to religious training in all these institutions, the home, the school, the college, and the seminary. In a celebrated case in Cincinnati in 1869, a group of laymen sought to restrain the Board of Education from ordering public schools to desist from the practice of daily Bible reading. Judge Alonzo Taft in his decision upholding the Board's action argued that, however seemingly innocuous, the practice of daily Bible reading which almost universally opened the school day was a highly symbolic act. Judge Taft argued that the practice was a form of Protestant worship and as long as it remained the schools had the aura of Protestant parochial schools. Repeatedly non-Protestant parents called upon the courts to secure some relief from this form of Protestant worship so deeply embedded in the "non-sectarian" piety of the public schools.[5]

What Harper, Angell, and the distinguished company gathered in the Chicago Auditorium Hotel on February 10, 1903, perceived was that the traditional Bible, understood as the very word of God to men, the center of Protestant religious authority and the source of Protestant piety, was disappearing from the world of Protestant scholarship. The dogmatic Bible, increasingly being banned from the public schools, was also being challenged at the seminary level by the assured results of more than a half century of German higher criticism of the Bible. Harper, a renowned Hebrew scholar, had himself brought the new textual critical study of the Bible to Yale Divinity School in 1886. He had, too, a remarkable gift for popularization and in his Bible study guides for the laity he sought to deflect interest from what the higher critics had taken away--Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, a relatively smaller matter; and the inerrancy of the scriptures as a whole based on divine authorship throughout, a much greater matter--by

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drawing attention to what they had established. He shared the conviction expressed by Rush Rhees, president of the University of Rochester, that whatever theories of Biblical revelation were undermined by modern textual and historical criticism of the Bible, the fact that the Bible had survived because it inspired was established beyond all doubt.[6] Shailer Mathews, a theologian brought to the Divinity School of the University of Chicago by Harper, recalled years later that Harper had been motivated to convene the 1903 conference by the actual problems he encountered teaching in the Hyde Park Baptist Sunday School; but his service on the Chicago Board of Education, as well as his scholarly interest in transforming Biblical study in both seminary and college, may also have contributed to his motivation.[7]

Harper proposed the idea of a national conference on religious education the previous year to a learned society of biblical scholars, the Council of Seventy, which he organized in 1895. The Council took its name from the old tradition that seventy Jewish scholars, each working independently, produced an identical Greek text of the Hebrew Old Testament in the third century B.C. Its purposes were to promote the historical, philogical, and comparative study of the Bible in the light of other ancient literatures. In October, 1902, the Council appointed a general committee to plan for the national convention on religious education composed of Harper, Shailer Mathews, and George L. Robinson of Chicago's McCormick Seminary. Chairman of the Program Committee as well, Harper

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revealed his famed organizational talent by associating with the convention, which he hoped would result in a permanent national organization, the educational luminaries, Nicholas Murray Butler[8] and James B. Angell. Also serving on the Program Committee were Josiah Strong, who, since the publication of his book Our Country in 1885,[9] was a persistent though conservative advocate for the social interpretation of Christianity, and Samuel T. Dutton, professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia. Frank McMurray, also of Teachers College, served on a three member Invitations Committee. McMurray, one of the founders of the National Herbartian Society, participated the year before in the reorganization of the Society into the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education. He also established an experimental Sunday School at Teachers College on the plea of faculty parents that they wanted a religious education for their children analogous intellectually to the weekday education they were receiving at the College's laboratory school.[10] Albion W. Small, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, and Philip S. Moxom, a pastor with a long interest in education, were the two other members.[11]

George Albert Coe, who held the John Evans professorship in moral and intellectual philosophy at Northwestern, served on the Arrangements Committee. Coe, just past forty, was moving steadily in his professional interests from philosophy in which he received his Ph.D. in 1891 to experimental psychology, and was ready in the winter of 1903 to turn the corner into a new career as an educationist. Young in terms of this new interest, Coe would grow old with the Religious Education Association organized in the conference's last session, living almost to the eve of its fiftieth anniversary.

Many of the participants in the conference were to achieve careers that won them a permanent place in American social history. John Dewey, already in his mid-forties, with the epochal Studies in Logical Theory completed, yet, like Coe, still only at less than mid-point in a long life, was to become the most famous.[12] But in addition to those mentioned earlier, the names of many of the original members of the Association were to become familiar in American educational and religious history. In any account of the religious history of the era the names of Edward S. Ames, Irving King, Edward Diller Starbuck, and Graham Taylor would figure;[13] and the names of Frederick Eby, Herman Harrell Horne and James E. Russell are familiar to the student of American educational history.[14] George Albert Coe's scholarly work in the psychology of religion kept him in close touch with Ames and Starbuck throughout his career. Nearly forty years later Coe and Starbuck wrote autobiographical essays for a volume entitled Religion in Transition[15] and Coe attended the dinner marking Ames' retirement from the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago in 1940. Although not finally to achieve equal recognition in the social history of the period, Coe moved as a man of equal interests and achievements among the others at the three day conference. His studies of conversion had been quoted by William James in his 1901-02 Gifford Lectures on "the varieties of religious experience"; and his contributions to the scientific study of the psychology of religion were then equal to those of Starbuck, Ames, and King.[16]

Following the hymn, "When Morning Gilds the Skies," at the opening of the second session of the conference, Coe, Dewey, and Starbuck gave their addresses on "the modern conception of education." Coe and Starbuck traced religious education as a part of general education noting that traditionally all education had been controlled by a religious conception of the aims of human life. The distinctively modern differentiation between religion and education emerged when the nation state became the sponsor of an education conceived as the universal right of all, a process which Coe would elaborate in Education for Citizenship thirty years later.[17] Following their addresses, Dewey spoke on religious education as conditioned by the principles of modern psychology and pedagogy.

For Coe, this association with Dewey was to be the beginning of a life-long intellectual companionship although there is no evidence that they ever knew each other personally.[18] Coe acknowledged in many of his writings his indebtedness to Dewey's thought and rejoiced publicly when Dewey's A Common Faith (1934) gave him grounds for his conviction that even Dewey's mature instrumentalism did not preclude recognition of the religious as an enduring aspect of human experience.[19] But while for Coe the conference marked a life-long commitment to religious education within the context of the historic church and under the conditions imposed by modern science and democracy, for Dewey it seems to mark as clearly a final turning away from all institutional religion and any education conducted under its sponsorship.[20]

In his address Dewey observed that modern psychology has no special revelations of its own to deliver to religious educators, but it can help interpret and illuminate certain general considerations. Modern psychological theory stresses the principle of growth and the consequent successive expansions of experience at different levels. The child with his own distinctive emotional and mental outlook must be helped to experience the truly religious aspects of his own growing life. The most serious handicap to religious education is the assertion that the spiritual and emotional experience of adults is the appropriate norm for the child's religious life. He advised religious educators to return to Jesus' teaching of the successive stages of growth--first the seed, then the blade, finally the ripening ear of corn. He ended his paper with the observation that the most fundamental of all educational questions concerns the moral and religious growth of persons.

Dewey was as ready as any of the participants in the conference to use Biblical phrases--learned long before in the context of a gospel of crisis and redemption--to underscore

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the contemporary principle of continuity. Nearly all those who addressed the conference were men who had received their education in the eighties and, to use Dewey's phrase, the impact of Darwin on their thought was deep and lasting.[21] In one way or another each of the speakers emphasized continuity between man and nature and continuity throughout the physical, mental, and moral growth of persons. But, despite this similarity, Dewey's remarks have a certain pro forma quality about them which distinguishes them from the enthusiastic addresses of the other speakers. His words suggest that he had inwardly withdrawn from the ideal which animated Harper and the conference which he had brought into being. How far he was beginning to move from the purposes of the conference and from his own preoccupations when he wrote, "The Obligation to the Knowledge of God," in 1884[22] is seen in an article he published in 1908, to be discussed below, in which he write of the problems of religious educators as an interested but detached observer.

Harper, an indefatigable textbook writer, anticipated that the conference addressed would be what he called "a great textbook for the world." Read now, these addresses make clear that the conference as a whole was designed to establish the possibility that the Protestant educational configuration could survive into the twentieth century by means of the very scientific scholarship which threatened to destroy it. Harper had frequently participated in Methodist Bishop John Vincent's extraordinarily successful attempt to transform camp meeting fervor into educational channels through summer institutes at Lake Chautauqua.[23] The February, 1903, gathering--perhaps significantly not in a summer setting of outdoor beauty, but in the urban mid-winter--can be seen as an attempt to do the reverse: to enkindle the new disciplines of psychology and pedagogy with evangelical purpose. The representatives of the educational establishment gathered at Chicago saw clearly that the transformation of the dogmatic Bible into the historical Bible of late nineteenth century scholarship created an educational crisis which threatened the infrastructure of the whole educational system.[24] Members of mainline Protestant denominations, confident that their faith complemented modern advances in science and society rather than opposing them, they were seeking some new infallible standard of their own to give stability in the contemporary educational situation.

Underlying all that was said at the conference is the key question of whether or not educational institutions could still transmit the Protestant type. However much scope educational institutions may give to individuals, most theorists from Plato to Durkheim have agreed that they function in society in such a way as to transmit a preferred type.[25] Education, as Werner Jaeger in his seminal study of classical education emphasized, is the direct expression of the educating group's standard. Jaeger's work has given renewed currency to the Greek word, paideia: the unifying standard that inhered in Greek civilization and informed its education.[26] Educational

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historians have increasingly adopted the term to express the unity in American educational institutions despite the salience of the principle of local autonomy which suggests to many that the schools of the nation respond to distinctive community standards and options. But, taken as a whole, the remarkable thing about American education is its homogeneity. There is a national standard operating in American education reflected in the national school ritual of the flag salute and in nationally produced and marketed textbooks. These, in turn, however, reflect a more subtle standard of the character type which the education is designed to reproduce. From the perspective of the last third of the twentieth century it seems clear that the American educational configuration of the nineteenth century served to transmit an idealized Protestant type.[27] Those who accepted Harper's invitation to attend the 1903 conference probably came because they were struggling to find ways of vitalizing the process by which that type was created.

They would go in many different directions as they sought an accommodation among the schools, the Protestant tradition, and the ever more clearly emerging secular culture. Some, like Josiah Strong, moved closer and closer to a bigoted faith that defined Americanism in terms of Protestantism;[28] others, like Edward S. Ames, sought a naturalistic basis for religion that would universalize their latent Protestantism; only a few followed Dewey in a radical rejection of all metaphysical values. This study will focus only incidentally on the great variety of ways in which the original members of the Religious Education Association developed intellectually. If their pilgrimage could be recounted in all its intricate detail, it would illuminate the many routes along which Protestants moved as they let go or sought to retain a hold on the public school.

It was their recognition of the inevitability of having to let go of the public school and the college from the ecology of Protestant educational institutions which explains the fervent devotion to the Sunday School of Harper and so many others at the conference. Under the intellectual and social conditions of the new century, the Sunday School would have to become a true school if it were to do the work which was now thrust upon it. George Albert Coe responded directly to this challenge to professionalize the church's education and make it the equal--his critics would later say, identical to--the best in the new secular education. As the leading theorist of the religious education movement over the next forty years, he is representative of all those who in 1903 were willing to permit standards emerging from within the culture to reshape the church's own patterns of nurture, and even, the church's message itself. After all, as a United States Commissioner of Education put it in 1907, was not the best in American culture a kind of "overflow Christianity"? In letting the best in that culture guide him, Coe testified that he saw this best as perfectly compatible with his Protestant faith.[29]

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During the next two and a half decades of his life Coe redefined the educational mission of the Protestant church. In a long retirement that lasted another quarter century, he defended that mission against attacks that came from a more aggressively secular society that the gentlemen of 1903 could have imagined and from a renascent orthodoxy within the circles of religious liberalism which they could only with equal difficulty have surmised.[30]

In the winter of 1903, however, all this was still in the future and at the conference Coe was among colleagues, who, drawing their inspiration from many sources, were then united in the conviction that they were launching a movement whose time had come. Coe summed up his understanding of the intellectual sources which contributed to this unity of outlook of the majority in a paper "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," published in 1904.[31] Far from casting a backward glance at the Egypt of the old educational configuration, Coe saw the religious education movement with which he had already identified himself as irrepressible in its creative potential for establishing a new paideia. It is significant that never once in the essay did he refer to Protestantism directly; the WASP consciousness was still dominant enough, perhaps, not to draw attention to itself. In the introduction to his first book, The Spiritual Life (1900), Coe identified the new in contemporary religion as having grown out of evangelicalism; in 1904 he identified the Christian faith, already stripped of all dogma, as only one

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component of religious education. The essay is clear expression of his personalistic idealism merged with an evolutionary naturalism and moving toward a still nascent pragmatism.

Coe interpreted the philosophy of the movement for religious education as growing out of psychological, sociological, and philosophical assumptions controlled by the principle of evolution and an immanental-personalist theology which was fully compatible with the same principle. These great intellectual themes always fascinated him more than the practical aspects of religious nurture and he elaborated them in his major books, The Psychology of Religion (1916), The Social Theory of Religious Education (1917), Motives of Men (1928), and in his last book, What is Religion Doing to our Consciences? (1943). Detailed attention to his mature development of these themes will be given in later chapters of this study, but at this point a summary of his essay will be suggestive of the intellectual climate in which the religious education movement was born. Accepting the radical implications of evolution for the religious life, Coe emphasized that in a real sense "the religious life of each of us is continuous with nature as a whole." Over a long career Coe would abandon some key beliefs of this 1904 essay, but the principle of continuity was to be the intellectual touchstone of his life. However much the piety of the Methodist home in which he was reared evaporated in what he called "the sunlight of my most critical intelligence," the vision of the organic unity of nature and man, the unbroken natural development from the physical to the mental to the religious never dimmed.[32]

Coe first drew attention in his essay to the teleological view of the world which the educational process itself implied. Since in education, nature in the form of the human mind takes conscious control of herself, he concluded that "education defined as a conscious carrying forward of a natural process includes man's will, the will to educate, within the concept of nature."[33] The purposes, or what Coe later liked to call "the wants," of the human mind are responsible for the future direction of the evolutionary process, particularly so for the future direction of social evolution. Although Coe did not refer to Frank Lester Ward, he made a distinction similar to that made by Ward between genetic and telic evolution in tracing the impact of Darwinism on social thought.[34] Here at the point where he linked social evolution as a conscious process with education lies the root of Coe's later educational radicalism. The conviction that education is to reconstruct society and religious education to reconstruct religion would grow only more insistent over the years.

Secondly, he saw the new philosophy of education as rooted in metaphysical idealism. Only a theory of knowledge based on an idealistic ontology could fuse together nature, culture, and society, a fusion which Coe defined as the essential feature of the new pedagogy. The immanence of God was the third foundation of the movement, for once accepted, it removed the opposition between education and grace, growth and conversion. Belief in the immanence of God transformed the theory of evolution from a threat to religious certainties to a luminous description of how the divine works in and through all things. Laws of nature become the orderly methods of a rational will in complete control of itself; and from the perspective of an immanentalist theology, "there is no break in nature when man, a self conscious and moral being, appears." From this perspective education is not merely a device of man; "it is a divine operation in men."[35]

The psychological point of view in religious education was also influenced by the theory of evolution. "Any separation," he wrote, "between religion and other consciousness, religious and other development is in principle impossible to modern thought."[36] Coe followed G. Stanley Hall, "the American Darwin of the mind," in emphasizing the importance of instincts for all mental functions.[37] The continuity of man's mind with mind in lower animal life gave increased power to the theory of instincts and also plausibility to the recapitulation theory which Hall also popularized. As late as his Psychology of Religion, published in 1916,[38] Coe still taught a theory of instincts although sometime after 1910 he abandoned Hall's recapitulation theory.[39] But in 1904 Coe accepted the idea that children in their psychial growth "re-traverse the path from animality to spirituality"; moving in their childhood through the cultural epochs of their race even, as was then thought, the embryo recapitulated the stages of organic evolution. Coe interpreted this theory in a way that mediated between the opposing doctrines that the child is naturally good and preternaturally depraved. The teaching of depravity pointed to the truth that there is always something in oneself to overcome; the opposite theory emphasized the truth that it is the self that has the impulse to overcome. Coe welcomed the current emphasis upon instincts as salutary. Western psychology, he noted, had been dominated too long by a Thomistic intellectualism which robbed the mind of vital impulses.

"The newer ethics" which "expresses all ethical conceptions whatsoever in terms of human society" was the fifth foundation of the religious education movement. In its more radical form this ethic asserted that

> Society originated under the law of natural selection; that conscience is entirely accounted for by the pressure of the social will upon the individual; that the only ethical good is social health, progress, etc.; and that the only sanctions of morality are social rewards and penalties.[40]

Coe believed, however, that social sanctions were insufficient to develop ethical character to its fullest. Even enthusiasm for humanity was no more than a "fad or a reaction from the ennui of egoism," unless it was suffused with some realization of the "spiritual movement of the universe . . . the eternal in the temporal, God in us."[41]

The philosophy of religion, which since Schleiermacher applied psychological method to both the history and metaphysics of religion, was a sixth contributory to the religious education movement. Coe noted that "the tribe destitute of religion" has never been found and that the history of religion begins with the religious impulse of men as a datum. Further, religion always includes within itself an educational process and this process is always modifying the religion out of which it grew. Any enlargement in the cognitive, ethical, or esthetical powers "enlarges the divine."[42] Given this interpretation, reinforced by the teaching of metaphysical idealism that all mental functions are performed under a supreme mind, Coe could confidently declare that any cultivation of persons brings them closer to the divine presence.

Lastly, Coe considered the continuity between the religious education movement and the philosophy of Christianity. The foundation of all educational method was the capacity of sharing life between older and younger; and Christianity, he concluded, was just such a sharing of life since it represented the savior, "who gave his life for many," as a teacher.[43]

Two themes significant for Coe's later thought are not explicitly touched upon in the essay. Science, in the form of biological evolution, does, of course, figure prominently; but science in its most general sense as method--what Coe would later call "the democracy of the intellect"--is absent. Absent, too, is the concept of democracy, a concept which Coe would later socialize and spiritualize so as to make it almost synonymous with Christianity. That such general themes were already much in the air and, indeed, constituted the new century's "climate of opinion," is revealed in an address delivered to a session of the Religious Education Association

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held in conjunction with a session of the National Educational Association in 1907. Since the speaker was the then Commissioner of Education, Elmer Ellsworth Brown, we can assume that before such an assembled group he developed themes with which he believed they were already familiar and toward which they were generally sympathetic.

He began by noting that the methods employed in education must always follow upon and complement the interests of the wider society. In the middle ages institutional religion dominated society and its methods controlled education; but the "centralizing and unifying fact of modern civilization," Brown told the nation's teachers, "is science, a science which is the same the world over."[44] Contrasted with this universal science, the parochialism of religion, split as it was into many competing sects, was highlighted. The one universal feature of the Christian religion was its teaching of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God and this had already found social expression in democracy. Brown asked his listeners to observe how vitally the several lines converged. A new moral consciousness was dawning in science's devotion to truth and democracy's devotion to brotherhood, a consciousness so profound that it was already transforming the methods and spirit of general education; in time it would transform religion as well. When the transformation was effected religion and education would be free to find their universal, and, Brown strongly prophecied, their unified expression.

Brown's predecessor as United States Commissioner of Education, William T. Harris, shared his conviction that the separation of religion and schooling was a temporary expedient. In an address to the National Educational Association in 1903, Harris declared that the separation of religion and education "was an incidental stage in the growth of civilization . . . it is not a permanent settlement of the matter."[45] Harris' Hegelianism enabled him to bear with the temporary separation because he believed that history itself would bring a larger and more inclusive synthesis to pass.

Thus buoyed up by an optimism coming from the synthezing idealism so characteristic of the period, and spurred on by the need to strengthen the educational ministry of the church spelled out so clearly at the 1903 conference, Protestant ministers, and laymen plunged actively into the religious education movement.[46] Soon the movement gave birth to curricular and methodological guides for the church and a new academic discipline for the seminary. The mood of religious educators was ebullient and some even began to believe that in their own brand of liberal Protestant faith they possessed the higher synthesis which Brown and Harris anticipated. Coe shared in some of these moods, even trying his hand at writing a curriculum guide, but his basically philosophic approach to the movement kept him aloof from such activity and from a too facile hope. His mood was closer to that of John Dewey, who in 1908 gave a sober warning to optimistic religious educators carried away by the belief that "the religion of the future" was already upon them.[47]

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Dewey began his essay by disavowing any appeal to those who are already committed to special dogmas of religion or who believe "that religion is a monopoly or a protected industry." He spoke directly to the religious educators who took as their own the philosophy of the movement as outlined by Coe in 1904 and whose premises denied any breach between man and the world and God. When such educators seek "special religious education at special times and places," then, he confessed, "a sense of unreality comes over me." They seem to say, he continued, that since religion is a

> . . . universal function of life, we must particularly safeguard it lest it disappear; that since religion is the consciousness of the spiritual import of experience, we must find mechanical appliances for developing it.[48]

Coe's total lifework shows how deeply sympathetic he was to the reasoning behind this complaint. As he followed the logic of his personalitic idealism to its uttermost limits, Coe moved further and further away from religious education as a form of pedagogy. It became increasingly a method for the social and theological reconstruction of the churches. It is not too much to say that religious education became for Coe what instrumentalism was for Dewey, a critical method of inquiry into existing morals and institutions.[49]

Over the years Coe would travel far with Dewey intellectually and arrive at nearly the same point. But each began their philosophic quests from positions which continued to influence their final pragmatism. Dewey's starting point was Hegelian idealism and, as Morton White has pointed out, once

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the absolute dropped out of his thought nature was there waiting to replace it. Coe's starting point was personalistic idealism and reality always retained for him a personalistic cast. It would be his one lasting tie to historic Christianity.[50]

In his 1908 essay Dewey admitted the theoretical possibility that the antinomy between "coming to know" in science and religion could one day be overcome. On that day, a "grace and sanction" lacking in the culture since the dissolution of the medieval synthesis would be restored.[51] But however desirable it might be, that end, he warned, was very far from view in the first decade of the twentieth century. He cautioned his readers to remember the long history behind present-day religions and to expect a long, slow maturation period for the new religion. The transformation of historical religions into a religious awareness that would be the "flower and fruition of the human spirit" would only slowly emerge from within modern culture. He described the religion to be with a certain literary gracefulness which he once acknowledged Hegelianism gave to his writings and which he increasingly lost as he moved further and further into pragmatism;[52] but he wrote of Christianity with a pungency only rarely characteristic of his style: "Oriental in its origin, it has since been Latinized and Germanized and there are even those who have dreamed of humanizing it."[53]

It is not clear in the essay whether Dewey is still to be included among the last; nor is it clear whether the future religion "thoroughly naturalized in the hearts and minds of men so that is can be considered publicly, openly, and by common tests"[54] will be a humanized Christianity or an entirely new faith. Dewey was not directly concerned with this problem in the essay and he advised religious educators not to worry about the shape of the new religion. He called upon them to devote themselves persistently and patiently to "the development of the ideas of life which lie implicit in our still new science and our still newer democracy."[55]

Over the next four decades, in teaching and writing, Coe would devotedly pursue the meaning of religion within the limits of science and democracy. In his thought the lines between democracy and science, religion and education would converge into a complex pattern that is a veritable intellectual maze. But in mapping the mazes in his thought, the intellectual Weltanschauung of a whole generation of educators who sought a new moral and religious standard can be traced afresh.

CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES

1. Proceedings of the First Annual Convention of the Religious Education Association, February 10-12, 1903 (Chicago: Executive Office, Religious Education Association, 1903); hereafter cited as Proceedings (1903), full report of the program and original membership list are given on pp. 297-403; see Religious Education XXIII (1928): 609-705 for twenty-fifth anniversary memorial essays; quotation is from Shailer Mathews, "Inception of the Religious Education Association," Religious Education XXIII: 619-621; James B. Angell's address, "The Next Step Forward in Religious Education," is found in Proceedings (1903), pp. 5-7.

2. Caroline Hazard and Mary E. Wooley, presidents respectively of Wellesley and Mount Holyoke Colleges, were original members but did not attend the 1903 meeting; in 1904 Caroline Hazard was elected one of the sixteen vice-presidents of the Religious Education Association, Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the Religious Education Association (Chicago: Executive Office, Religious Education Association, 1904); the Roman Catholic Bishop of Peoria, John L. Spaulding, was elected to the Council of the Religious Education Association in 1904; however, the members, the tone, and the preoccupations of the early conferences identify the Religious Education Association as overwhelmingly Protestant.

3. Robert W. Lynn, church historian on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, is doing research in nineteenth century Protestant attitudes toward the public school frequently cited by Lawrence A. Cremin, the leading educational historian in America today; see Lynn's Protestant Strategies in Education (New York: Association Press, 1964); and his The Big Little School: Sunday Child of American Protestantism (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) with Elliott Wright; Cremin discussed the nineteenth century configuration of home, school, and church in his essay, "American Education: Some Notes Toward a New History," an American Educational Research Association--Phi Delta Kappa Award Lecture given at the Annual Meeting of the AERA in 1969 and published as a monograph by Phi Delta Kappa International (Bloomington, 1972); Lynn described the ecology of educational institutions established by Protestants around 1820 in his "The Uses of History: An Inquiry Into the History of American Religious Education," Religious

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Education LXVII (March-April 1972): 83-97; Cremin acknowledged that if he were rewriting his book, The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961), he would give greater attention to transformations within the American religious tradition which paralleled the educational transformation of the early twentieth century.

4. Perhaps one of the most interesting and as yet untaped resources for documentation of this thesis is the Proceedings and Addresses of the National Educational Association, 1889, devoted to the theme, "Do Denominational Schools Have a Place in America?"; one of the participants, Bishop Keane, newly appointed Rector of Catholic University of America, spoke on behalf of Catholic parochial schools, pp. 114-123; his two opponents strongly implied--one asserted it flatly--that any church which needed to educate its people outside the public school system was a political threat to American's free institutions, pp. 123-147, 152-179.

5. A great repository of arguments on the "non-sectarian" piety of Bible reading in the schools is The Bible in the Public Schools: Arguments in the Case of John D. Minor et al vs. The Board of Education of the City of Cincinnati with the Opinions and Decision of the Court (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke and Company, 1870; reprinted in 1967 by Da Capo Press); Judge Alonzo Taft's remarks on the control of the schools by Protestants are found on pp. 408, 410-411; Judge Taft's decision was cited in Abingdon School District vs. Schempp, U. S. Reports, CCCLXXIV, 215.

6. Rush Rhees, "Religious Education as Affected by Historical Study of the Bible," Proceedings (1903), pp. 80-88.

7. Paul Shorey's biographical sketch of Harper in The Dictionary of American Biography VIII: 287 ff. highlights Harper's many interests; see also Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, William R. Harper: First President of the University of Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928); Joseph E. Gould, The Chautauqua Movement: An Episode in the Continuing American Revolution (New York: State University of New York, 1961) somewhat unconvincingly asserts that Harper used the Chautauqua movement as his model for the University of Chicago; Gould does give full details of Harper's work as Principal of the Chautauqua College of Liberal Arts, licensed by the New York Legislature to give degrees in 1883, pp. 13, 21; for Harper's dominating position at the 1903 conference, see Religious Education XXIII (1928): pp. 619-621, 637-640; two of Harper's many texts are The Structure of the Text of the Book of Amos (Chicago, 1904) and The Priestly Element in the Old

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Testament, an Aid to Historical Study for Use in Advanced Bible Classes (Chicago, 1905); he contributed "The University and Religious Education" to *The Trend in Higher Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1905).

8. In *Across the Busy Years: Recollections and Reflections* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), Nicholas Murray Butler makes no mention of the 1903 conference; Shailer Mathews recalled that he was prevented from attending the 1903 meeting by the illness of Mrs. Butler, "Inception of the Religious Education Association," *Religious Education* XXIII (1928): 621; reference to the tradition surrounding the Greek translation of the Old Testament can be found in *Septuaginta: Id Est Vetus Testamentum Graece Iuxta LXX Interpretes* edited by Alfred Rahlfs, 7th ed. (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1962), p. xii.

9. Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis* (New York: Baker & Taylor Co. for American Home Missionary Society, 1886; reprint ed. by Jurgen Herbst and published by Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963).

10. It is difficult to secure information about this early Sunday School at Teachers College; Professor Cremin in a letter to me dated January 6, 1970, indicated there are no extant records; the above information is from "Sophia Lyon Fahs Is 95: An Interview with a Pioneer Religious Educator," *The Religious Educator* I (September 1971), pp. 4-5.

11. Moxom supported the Blair Amendment at a hearing conducted by the Senate Committee on Education and Labor in February 1889; the Blair Amendment called for the teaching of the principles of the Christian religion in the public schools while at the same time reaffirming the principle of the separation of church and state and specifically the unconstitutionality of using public funds for church supported education; see *Notes of Hearings Before the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, Friday, February 15 and Friday, February 22, 1889 on the Joint Resolution (S.R. 86) Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States Respecting Establishment of Religion and Free Public Schools* (Washington, 1889); Moxom also published *The Religion of Hope* (Boston, 1896).

12. *Studies in Logical Theory*, published in 1903 by the University of Chicago Press, was a part of the Decennial Publications of the University; dedicated to William James, he, in turn, hailed it as the beginning of a Chicago School; see Jane Dewey's "Biography of John Dewey," in Paul Arthur Schlipp, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1939; reprinted by Tudor Publishing Co., 1951).

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13. See Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

14. James Russell was the first dean of Teachers College; see Cremin, *The Transformation of the School*, 172 ff.; Frederick Eby, among other works, authored *The Development of Modern Education* (New York, 1940) with C. F. Arrowood; Herman Harrell Horne, Professor of Philosophy and Education at New York University from 1909 to 1940, wrote *The Democratic Philosophy of Education, Companion to Dewey's Democracy and Education: Exposition and Comment* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1932).

15. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," and Edward Diller Starbuck, "Religion's Use of Me," both in Vergelius Ferm, ed., *Religion in Transition* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1937); Ferm noted that were one to list the pioneers in the twentieth century born science of psychology of religion, one would unhesitatingly name Coe and Starbuck along with James B. Leuba.

16. See Chapter III for full details.

17. In July, 1903, Coe addressed the National Education Association on the same topic, *Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1903*, pp. 341-345; Coe, *Education for Citizenship: The Sovereign State as Ruler and as Teacher* (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1932).

18. Jane Dewey wrote that after coming to Columbia University Dewey enjoyed associations with several members of the faculty of Union Theological Seminary; among these, she does not mention Coe, who served on the Union faculty from 1909 to 1922, "Biography of John Dewey," in Schlipp, *Philosophy of John Dewey*, pp. 3-34.

19. Coe, "The Definitive Dewey," a review of *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, edited by Paul Arthur Schlipp (Evanston, 1939) in *Religious Education* XXXV (January-March 1940): 45-50.

20. According to Jane Dewey her father did not transfer his church membership when he moved to New York City in 1904, "Biography of John Dewey," Schlipp, *The Philosophy of John Dewey*; elected to the Council of the Religious Education Association in 1904, Dewey's name does not appear in membership lists after 1904.

21. Frank Knight Sanders commented twenty-five years later on the youthfulness of the original members which permitted nearly all of them to remain active to the twenty-fifth anniversary in "Our Fallen Leaders," *Religious Education* XXIII (1928): 609-705.

22. First published in the Student Christian Association,

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University of Michigan VI (November 1884): 23-25; reprinted in John Dewey, The Early Works, 1882-1892, Volume I, Early Essays and Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), pp. 61-63.

23. See Chapter IV, Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School.

24. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the call issued by the Council of Seventy, Proceedings (1903), p. 317; and also the Departments specified in the constitution adopted at the Conference, pp. 334-339; among the Departments established were Universities and Colleges, Theological Seminaries, Secondary Public Schools, Elementary Public Schools, Home, and Libraries.

25. Durkheim, in his 1902-03 lectures, noted that there exist two beings within each person, the individual being and the social being or type; the social being expresses "the ideas, sentiments, and practices" of the group of which we are a part and, Durkheim concluded, "to constitute this being in each of us is the end of education," Education and Sociology translated and with an introduction by Sherwood D. Fox (New York: The Free Press, 1956), p. 72.

26. Werner Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939); see Preface to the first volume.

27. See Chapter I of Henry Steele Commager's The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character Since the 1880's (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 38 ff.; also Part II, "The Religion of the Heart," and Part V, "Education in a Democracy," in Richard Hofstadter's Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963); portions of Part V were first read at a 1961 Conference of The Committee on the Role of Education in American History; see the committee's report, Education and American History (New York: The Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1965), p. 16.

28. As touching the public school, the apotheosis of this approach came in Oregon in 1922 when the state legislature passed a compulsory public school attendance bill; see David B. Tyack, "The Perils of Pluralism: The Background of the Pierce Case," American Historical Review LXXIV (October 1968): 74-98.

29. Coe's confidence that the best in the culture is redemptive is clearly seen in his last book, What is Religion Doing to our Consciences (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943).

30. Kendig Brubaker Cully, The Search for a Christian Education--Since 1940 (Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1965), summarized the critique made against the liberal religious education movement by its neo-orthodox critics; one of the earliest critics was H. Shelton Smith, Faith and Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941).

31. "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," The American Journal of Theology VIII (April 1904): 225-239; see also McMurray Smith Richey, "Conceptions of Man in the Thought of George Albert Coe and William C. Bower" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1954), p. 307.

32. See below, Chapter II.

33. Coe, "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," p. 226.

34. Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944; rev. ed. published in New York by George Braziller, Inc., 1959), pp. 71-77.

35. Coe, "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," p. 229 and 231.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 321-332.

37. The phrase is Merle Curti's in The Social Ideas of American Educators with a new chapter on "The Last Twenty-Five Years" (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield Adams and Co., 1965); originally published in 1935 as Vol. X of The Report of the American Historical Association Commission on the Social Studies in the Schools by Charles Scribner's Sons; see Chapter XII, "G. Stanley Hall: Evolutionist, 1846-1924," p. 406.

38. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1916.

39. Norris B. Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation Applied to Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, 1955), p. 72; see also Chapter IV below.

40. Coe, "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," pp. 230-231.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 237.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

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44. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, "Some Relations of Religious Education and Secular Education," Religious Education II (April 1907-February 1908): 121-126; the address was given to an R.E.A. Conference held in conjunction with the N.E.A. meeting at Los Angeles, California, July 10, 1907.

45. William Torrey Harris, "The Separation of the Church from the School Supported by Public Taxes," Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1903, pp. 351-360; both Brown and Harris were elected to the Council of the Religious Education Association in 1904.

46. The early volumes of Religious Education are the best source for information on the years immediately following 1903; a good summary of the breadth of the movement is given in Robert W. Lynn, "The Uses of History: An Inquiry into the History of American Religious Education," Religious Education LXVII (March-April 1972): 83-97.

47. John Dewey, "Religion and Our Schools," Hibbert Journal (July 1908); reprinted in Joseph Ratner, ed., Intelligence in the Modern World: John Dewey's Philosophy (New York: Random House, 1939), pp. 702-715.

48. Ibid., p. 704.

49. Morton White, Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism with a New Preface and Epilogue (Boston, Beacon Press, 1959), p. 7.

50. Morton White, The Origin of Dewey's Instrumentalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 46-47; see also two doctoral studies: John Clifford Haney, Jr., "A Critical Comparison of the Educational Philosophy of John Dewey and George A. Coe" (Boston University, 1959) and Norris B. Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation Applied to Education" (Yale, 1955).

51. Dewey, "Religion and Our Schools," p. 703.

52. John Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," in G. P. Adams and W. P. Montague, Contemporary American Philosophy, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1930), pp. 16-17; quoted by Herman Harrell Horne in the Preface to his The Democratic Philosophy of Education.

53. Dewey, "Religion and Our Schools," p. 709.

54. Ibid., p. 711.

55. Ibid., p. 715.

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CHAPTER II

SALVATION BY EDUCATION

In The Religion of a Mature Mind,[1] published in 1902, Coe wrote that those who described the progressive schools of his day almost invariably contrasted them with the beliefs and practices of the church of an earlier day. As usually drawn the contrast was between the humane spirit and scientific method of the school and a dogmatic theology which emphasized the judgment of a transcendent God. To many at the turn of the century, the school seemed to be far in moral advance of the church; but, Coe continued, if we compare

> . . . the ideals of the new education with those of progressive Christianity, we discover no such gulf as is commonly supposed to exist. On the contrary, we find something more resembling parallel lines of development.[2]

Coe's own educational development uniquely prepared him to understand and appreciate the parallel lines of development of "the new education" and what he here called "progressive Christianity." He was educated during a time when many influences, political, economic, social, and intellectual, were shaping a broad based progressivism in American life. Richard Hofstadter and Lawrence A. Cremin have described the complex forces which led to the emergence of progressivism in political life and progressivism in education.[3] Similarly, Kenneth Cauthen has traced the rise of progressivism in American Protestant thought.[4] This chapter will focus upon the

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influences which shaped Coe's religious liberalism; subsequent chapters will describe his life-long commitment to what he believed to be the parallel, if not the convergent, ideals of "the new theology" and "the new education."

Coe was educated in the quarter century from 1875 to 1900 which has often been identified as a critical period in American religious history.[5] These years were critical in the root sense of the word for they witnessed a decisive turning point. In 1875, all the chairs of theology in the leading Protestant seminaries were held by men who adhered basically to the Calvinist doctrines as they had been modified by Jonathan Edwards; by the end of the century these men had all been replaced by thinkers who represented "the new theology," or, as in the quote from Coe above, "progressive Christianity."[6] By the twentieth century the usual designation for this new theology was liberalism.

Liberal Protestantism was and is a complex movement which resulted from a flowing together of three seemingly disparate influences: evangelical piety, philosophical idealism, and the rationalist tradition of the Enlightenment.[7] Since the history of this wider movement has been traced by many historians, it will only be outlined in this chapter. The emphasis in this chapter will highlight the personal and educational influences which shaped Coe's development. It may be appropriate to remark here, however, that in following the intellectual pilgrimage of Coe we will be able to discern in his life the same pattern in small scale which characterized the movement as a whole. In Coe's life, the interplay of a pietistic emphasis upon religious experience and a commitment to idealism as a mediating philosophy between science and religion created a religious perspective which was genuinely original with him. Coe took pride in the fact that his religious liberalism did not come to him second hand,[8] but was forged out of the elements of his own life experience. An adequate survey of Coe's education must include the shaping influence upon him of the religious heritage of his native region, the piety of his Methodist family, and the formal studies of his college and graduate years. These educational experiences will have more significance, however, if before describing them, we identify first in a general way some of the formative factors in American religious liberalism.

Protestant liberalism can be identified by three underlying principles which gave the movement a certain coherence despite the great variety of emphases among theological liberals themselves.[9] From the eighteenth century on theology responded to the principles of continuity, autonomy, and dynamism coming from science, philosophy, and the Christian tradition itself. These reinforced and conditioned one another giving rise to a completely fresh theological perspective which stressed the immanence of God, the centrality of religious experience, and the evolution of both nature and man.[10]

To its adherents, liberalism seemed to be a recovery of the essential truths of the Christian faith which had long been obscured by the dominance of a Greek inspired metaphysics. To its critics, however, liberalism represented a theological position completely alien to Christianity. These critics maintained that the Christian faith at a minimum required a belief in divine transcendence, assent to certain doctrines, and a stress on the qualitative difference between the natural and the supernatural. The principle of continuity, however, challenged the traditional teaching of God's transcendence; the principle of autonomy challenged all authoritatively imposed doctrines; and the principle of dynamism challenged all fixed categories of being. A brief consideration of each of these principles will indicate something of their cumulative effect in restructuring the whole content of Christianity, a restructuring radical enough to justify the designation of the liberal's theological position as "the new theology."[11]

In his analytical study of liberalism, Kenneth Cauthen identified the principle of continuity as the characteristic doctrine of the liberals.[12] It enabled them to reject the ancient distinctions between man and God, reason and revelation, Christ and other men, Christianity and other religions, nature and grace, the sacred and the secular, the individual and society, the natural and the supernatural. The principle of continuity permitted the liberals to retain practically every traditional doctrine of Christianity while radically recasting its meaning.[13] Only miracles resisted the logic of their interpretation and thus were rejected outright.

Both the rationalism of the eighteenth century and the romanticism of the nineteenth century contributed toward the dominance of the principle of continuity. As used by the liberals, the principle of continuity connoted both the uniformity of law which was the legacy of rationalism, and the unity of the purpose or spirit pervading the whole created order which was the legacy of romanticism. Believing in continuity, the liberals were confident that no developments in the natural sciences could threaten what was permanent in Christianity since one divine spirit was immanent in both the lawfulness of nature and the religious culture of mankind.

The second key principle of liberalism was autonomy or the rejection of any arbitrary appeal to external authority.[14] The significance of the Enlightenment for Immanual Kant was that it signaled the intellectual coming of age of Western man.[15] From that time forward the autonomous reason of mankind became the judge of all things including the value of truths traditionally verified by revelation. Autonomy, however, was also strengthened by a movement internal to Protestantism which lay outside the rationalist tradition of the Enlightenment altogether. In the eighteenth century religious emotion long pent up within the confines of an increasingly arrid orthodoxy suddenly sought release in movements which although widely separated in space nevertheless had close affinity. Pietism in Germany, Methodism in England, and revivalism in the United States were movements fed by distinct religious traditions in each country; but it is important to note at this point that they all reinforced the principle of autonomy in religion in a similar way.[16] Christianity from the mid-eighteenth century on could no longer be defined as a dogmatic system of beliefs existing outside the individual; religious knowledge was now interpreted as coming through personal experience and was validated by the emotions as well as by the reason. Revivalism in America was a movement strong enough to soften the hard teaching of Calvin that in the matter of salvation human beings were completely determined by the divine will and incapable of exercising free will. This central doctrine of Calvin was muted as preachers emphasized the choice and the responsibility of the believer to accept or reject the salvation that was offered to him.[17] The attempt of Kant[18] at the end of the eighteenth century to ground religious faith in the imperatives of the practical reason and not in the speculations of the theoretical reason was foreshadowed a half century earlier in the piety of Count Zinzendorf, the zeal of John Wesley, and the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. As the century progressed theologians influenced by the revival movement emphasized feeling as primary in the religious experience and knowing as secondary.

The third principle shaping religious liberalism was dynamism. Even as Kant was the towering figure in the philosophic tradition from which liberalism took the principle of autonomy, Hegel was the dominating figure in the philosophic tradition from which liberalism took its commitment to a dynamic view of God's revelation in history. Influenced by Hegel, scholars took a fresh look at the history of Israel recorded in the Old Testament and discovered there a progressive revelation continuing throughout her history. Since the scriptures were now interpreted in such a way that progressive revelation became normative, the liberals increasingly adopted a perspective in which all theological formulations were seen as tentative. The liberals recognized no fixed points beyond which history could not go in modifying the past and its traditions. For the liberals, the God who was immanent in all past events expressed himself dynamically in the openness of the future to all possibilities.[19]

If George Albert Coe had followed Henry Adams' example and left us his own full reflections upon his education, he might well have entitled them, "The Education of a Religious Liberal." Not only did Coe's formal schooling educate him into an acceptance of liberalism, but dominant influences in the religious culture of his home and community also predisposed him toward liberalism. But unlike Adams, Coe never systematically explored his own education.[20] Only scattered and oblique references to his personal life can be found in his unpublished correspondence while no more than a dozen brief insights can be gleamed from all his published books. In 1937, when he was seventy-five years old, he write his only extended essay on his personal and intellectual pilgrimage.[21]

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Within the limits imposed by the scarcity of the documentary evidence, the remainder of this chapter will review the education of George Albert Coe describing the religious climate of the region in which he grew up, the religious training he received within his family, and, lastly, the impact of his formal studies at Rochester and Boston upon his mature thought.

In 1859, the year that George Albert Coe's father was ordained deacon in the Methodist Church, Charles Darwin published his Origin of Species. It was to be a book which would shake the foundations of American Protestantism in the next half century, and, perhaps more significantly for Reverend Coe, it would shape the intellectual outlook of his son to be born three years later. The Genesee Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, in the bounds of which Reverend Coe conducted his ministry, was in the grip of an intense ecclesiastical struggle in 1859, but the debate then raging turned not on man's descent from the apes, but rather on the decline of Methodists from the pristine purity of John Wesley's discipline.[22] It was the spiritual declension in "the fair heritage of our Zion" which agitated the Methodist pastors and laity in this far western region of New York State.

Charles Grandison Finney, the great revivalist of the first half of the nineteenth century, called this region, "the burned over district."[23] Finney believed that the excesses of the Methodist circuit riders during the first quarter of the nineteenth century had hardened the hearts of these rural New Yorkers against all religious appeals, but his own revival meetings in western New York, most notably the revival he sparked in Rochester in 1831, proved that the fire of religious enthusiasm could still sweep over the people. In his study of the religious history of this area from 1800 to 1850, Whitney R. Cross referred to the stretch of land along the line of the Erie Canal as "a psychic highway." Upon this broad belt of land, he wrote,

> . . . congregated a people extraordinarily given to unusual religious beliefs, peculiarly devoted to crusades aimed at the perfection of mankind and the attainment of happiness.[24]

The region had been settled around 1800 by Yankees from Connecticut and Massachusetts who had succumbed to "Genesee fever" on hearing reports of the rich soil lying west of the Adirondack Mountains. The migrants were youthful, frequently younger sons, eager to create their own fortunes in a new land. Cross suggests that the population's youthfulness, its experience of loss of family ties, and the restraints of established community life made it responsive to enthusiasms of all kinds, both religious and secular. Historic standards for both civil and ecclesiastical communities dimmed as these transplanted Yankees sought new patterns of meaning for their lives on the frontier.

The prevalence of millennial expectation of the Genesee Valley well illustrates the waning force of ecclesiastical tradition among the settlers. Various New Testament statements about the return of Christ have led to the development in Christian thought of two major interpretations of the millennium. Premillennialism is the teaching that Christ will return to usher in a thousand year reign of peace and justice; post millennialism is the teaching that the millennial felicity under the reign of the saints will climax after a thousand years in the return of Christ. Although never rejecting millennialism, the historic church always tempered its significance by pointing to the scriptural warning that no one knows the day or hour of such things. Since millennialism of either kind is an obvious threat to all established earthly authorities, both in the church and the state, it rarely flourishes where either civil or ecclesiastical authority is strong. However, at many points in history, groups of believers, usually springing from the ranks of the poor and uneducated, have asserted that the millennium was at hand either in an imminent return of Christ or in the thousand year reign of his saints. The fact that millennial groups originated and flourished in the "burned over district" indicates that neither civil or ecclesiastical authority was strong enough to bind the religious imagination of the settlers of the region who lost a sense of physical continuity with the established authorities of the past after leaving the settled communities of the east. They had been thrown open to the challenge and the promise of the present and each settler, expecting great things for himself, found it easy, perhaps, to share in a social vision which expected radical transformation of the world. In their support of millennial groups like the Shakers and the Millerites we can sense a yearning in the people of the Genesee Valley for a communal authority and perfection which they had not found in their new communities.[25]

The Methodist denomination benefited from, but was also subject to divisions arising from, the intense religious enthusiasm of the region. Beginning in the 1850's and continuing to the end of the century, a millennial group, the Nazarites, was influential within the Genesee Conference.[26] The Nazarites, sometimes called "the sanctified ones," charged that the ministers and laity of the Conference had fallen away from essential Methodism, obeying only the letter of the New Testament and not its call to full perfection. They insisted that only those who had received full sanctification and were committed to the millennial transformation of the world could be received into church membership. A minister of the Genesee Conference who had embraced Nazaritism called upon his fellow Methodists

> . . . to make their lives an offering . . . to speed the achievement of social equality, racial intermarriage, woman's suffrage, temperance reform, and other beauties of the millennium: Let Christ abolish sin from your souls of whatever sort by his indwelling grace. Let your heart become his peaceful realm. . . . Labor by every word and deed to make all other hearts equally perfect. Strive to bring the laws of society into subjection to His control. Root up the gnarled trunks of prejudice. Toil cheerfully, hopefully, faithfully, to bring in the Grand Sabbatic Year, the Jubilee of Heaven.[27]

Against this bold vision of a complete union of personal and social righteousness in a millennial expectation, the simplicity and earnest piety enjoined on Methodists by their Book of Discipline[28] seemed to the Nazarites no more than a conventional moralism untouched by higher enthusiasm.

At the annual meeting of the Genesee Conference in 1861, however, the majority rejected the demands of "the sanctified ones" that all ministers and laity not living up to their standards be dropped from church membership. The conservative majority won a decisive victory in this vote, but they could never completely root out Nazaritism as a movement within the Conference because the movement, as we have seen, reflected the religious enthusiasms of the region as a whole, but also partly because the movement witnessed to a profound optimism about the human condition which had always been a distinctive feature of the Wesleyan tradition itself. Major interpreters of the Christian faith, Paul,[29] Augustine,[30] Calvin,[31] and, in more recent times, Reinhold Niebuhr,[32] have been pessimistic in their estimation of how fully a believer could live a life free from sin. What was distinctively new in Wesley's preaching which sparked the great Methodist revival in eighteenth century England and America was an emphasis upon the possibility that the Christian could move on to a life fully perfected in love.[33] As a historian of the Genesee Conference pointed out,[34] many of those who voted against the Nazarites in 1861 were in fundamental agreement with their motivations and affirmations, but they believed that the Nazarites were making a Christian possibility into a new legalism. Their vote reflected their concern for the peace and unity of the churches within the Conference; it was not a rejection of the millennial hope of a transformed world.

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The same conference which voted against the Nazarites also ordained Deacon Coe an Elder and accepted him into full ministerial standing. One year later his only son, George Albert, was born. Although Coe never referred in his private or published writing to the social idealism or religious enthusiasm of the region in which he spent his boyhood and young manhood, the concerns of Coe's mature life reflect them accurately. In the absence of documentary confirmation, it is not possible to say that the religious and social agitation of the Genesee area exerted a determinative influence upon Coe. However, even if Coe's life-long preoccupation with the relation between the spiritual and the social cannot be traced to the social ferment of "the burned over district," the social history reviewed here so briefly gives a historic perspective within which to judge Coe. It is suggestive to recall at this point that Coe's first book, published in 1900, was a study of conversion and the quality of the spiritual life; his last book, published in 1943, traced the process by which religious insight sensitizes persons to the need for social reform. Coe's social thought was always characterized by an optimistic expectation of personal and social transformation, a secularized legacy, perhaps, of the millennialism of the religious reformers of the Genesee Valley.

In statements scattered throughout his writings, Coe recorded the deep influence made upon him in his early years by the settled piety of his Methodist mother. Although Coe

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was deeply influenced in seminary by the teaching of the German theologian, Albrecht Ritschl, that religious certainty grows out of our consciousness of religious need, he acknowledged that it was his mother who first awakened him to the truth of this insight. Once as a boy he had been deeply troubled that his prayers were not being answered. When he brought this concern to his mother, she replied: "May not your impulse to pray be God's manifestation of Himself to you?" This comment of his mother's unfolded in time for Coe into an interpretation of the religious life as a whole.[35] Aside, however, from a few scattered general references to the piety of a Methodist parsonage home, Coe never referred to his father either directly or indirectly in his published or private correspondence. He recorded only one incident involving his sister, Hattie. As a young child he bit her and made her cry. His mother then called him over and said, "I want to show you just how you made sister feel." Then she bit firmly the lobe of an ear illuminating by that act, Coe wrote, a small boy's social thinking.[36] A poignant indication of the lack of easy intimacy between the parents and the children in Coe's home is his 1917 observation: "Not long ago I learned of a family in which the father and mother takes part regularly in the children's daily story hour preceding bedtime."[37]

Looking back on the religious nurture he received, Coe remembered that the Bible was the center of the family's devotion. No one gave any thought to the impression the words and images of different portions of the Bible were making upon the children since it was firmly believed that the one word of God was speaking throughout the Bible. Hearing the Bible read aloud at family worship, the young child was as likely to hear a violent passage describing God's wrath as to hear a passage describing divine love and mercy.[38] The intimate act of prayer, too, was governed by dogma. Coe recalled that often prayer was no more than the rehearsal of the catechism before God.[39] Coe never forgot his spontaneous childish reactions to this orthodox training. He remembered that as a little child, seeing a storm coming up, he stopped his play, knelt on the lawn, and begged God not to let it rain. "This is real prayer," he wrote as a man of thirty-eight, "not because the child requests a particular favor, but because he assumed toward God a personal relation that is appropriate for a little child. He makes the entirely Christian assumption that the All-Father is interested in even the games of childhood."[40] Against the child's ability to respond to God in a "positive, free and vital" way, Coe contrasted the orthodox teaching which impinged so heavily on his childhood that sin stood as a barrier between himself and God.

A slight asthmatic condition, which Coe believed was aggravated somewhat by his mother's over-protectiveness, kept Coe at home until the age of nine.[41] He thereby escaped what he called the "meagre schools"[42] around his boyhood home of Mendon, Monroe County, New York. The still frontier conditions of the region made it possible for Coe to acquire an early familiarity with the out of doors which he never lost. Unfortunately, the frequent moves which a Methodist minister would have been obliged to make kept him from developing close friendships with boys his own age. He write of his isolated childhood that it had the positive benefit of teaching him how to engage in self-directed activities of study and play. Purposeful doing, he wrote, became paramount in his character and his thought. At seventy-nine years of age, in 1941, Coe gave a speech before fellow retirees at Claremont, California, entitled, "A Philosophy of Play," in which he quoted Schiller's observation that we are most human when we play.[43] A biographer can only regret that Coe did not permit the playful side of his nature to emerge more fully in his work. In 1928, he wrote a witty and engaging article exploring various mind-body theories in which he fantasized a sphinx interrogating a group of psychologists in order to discover the relationship between her animal body and human head.[44] An appendix to his last book included reviews written from the perspective of a Marxist, a neo-orthodox critic, and a humanist. He himself wrote the reviews and they reveal his love of intellectual play even when old age cut him off from active play.[45]

In a biographical sketch written when he was seventy-one, he recalled that even the chores of his rural childhood were opportunities for play and joyful learning. He had a horse to pet, to feed, to curry, and ride as well as his own chickens to raise from the shell. The beauty of the Genesee Valley made his childhood "a pastoral idyll" and he remembered that in summer and autumn fruits were within reach of his hand.[46] But even as a youth George Albert was sensitive to the moral meanings of his encounter with nature. Once in sport he shot a meadowlark. When the bird lay dead in his hands, Coe found that his desire to hunt and kill was superseded by a new desire to sustain and protect. He theorized from that episode that what some call instincts are capable of modification through experience.[47] Although he early lost pleasure in hunting, he retained all his life the love of boating and sailing which he acquired as a boy.[48]

But, as Coe grew, he increasingly came under social restraints. The clothes prescribed for the men of that day were "a yoke of servitude" to which in time Coe had to submit. He disliked the starched collars and the drab colors which decorum demanded; he resented the custom which demanded that coats be worn in torrid summers. But as social conventions pressed around him, he found he was not strong enough to resist. He would have preferred to follow his inclination to dress in color schemes from leaves and blossoms, from sea, sky, and cloud, sunrises and rainbows--but he did not dare![49] During his youth a Methodist minister and his family had to avoid all appearance of "worldliness." "Fashion, fondness for social graces and amenities, and light conversation" were all alike dangerous because they distracted the mind from higher concerns. And, as Coe noted, they were conspicuously absent from the life of those who, like ministers and their families, were most clearly marked by piety. Dancing, card-playing, theatre-going, even Sunday newspapers, were all condemned. The correct life for a Christian was well established and required regular church attendance, daily Bible reading, family prayers, and grace at every meal. Where these ideas dominated even the play which brought joy into the life of an isolated boy was regarded with suspicion.[50]

If George Albert remembered with distate all that was narrow and confining in the Methodist church in the 1860's and 1870's, he remembered, too, in later years that the church mediated to him a message of radical good will and the promise of human participation in divine love.[51] His youthful idealism was further nourished by the literature of the Victorian period. He identified the dominant mood of his generation as one consonant with the "smooth confidence" of Tennyson that "nothing walks with aimless feet." "Humankind," he wrote of those years, "felt itself to be young, growing, destined for high achievement." In his memory austere biblical prophecies jostled for a place with the morning song of Browning that "all's well with the world." The apophthegm of Emerson that when two neighbors converse across a fence "Jove nods to Jove over the head of each" struck a deep note in the mind of Coe.[52]

James Russell Lowell's poem, "The Cathedral," written in 1869, was a life-long favorite and he frequently quoted it in his books.[53] The poem's affirmation that "God is in all that liberates and lifts" well sums up Coe's most mature conviction. Despite all the religious restrictions which loomed so large in his recorded reminiscence of his childhood, there must have been many influences in Coe's childhood religious training that pointed him toward seeking God in experiences that liberated and expanded his consciousness. Perhaps, to quote Lowell's lines, those years made him "unconscious heir" to "old Judea's gift of secret fire"; someone who ". . . spite of himself shall surely learn to know some divine thing, large-hearted, brotherly . . . pleased with his world, and hating only cant."[54]

In 1880, at eighteen, Coe entered Rochester, newly named a university following the current fashion, but still in fact a church-related college in the tradition of the earlier half of the century.[55] At this time, he was, in his own words, "a young conformist."[56] Years later, commenting on the significance of student years, Coe wrote that they are the times when "one should receive abundant experience of mutuality in forming judgments, which implies the experience of having one's most critical judgments criticized and refined."[57] Rochester provided Coe the opportunity for just such re-evaluation and reformulation of his ideas. Coe's religious and philosophic interest undoubtedly marked him as a serious young man at Rochester, but in other respects he entered fully into the social life of the college. He joined a fraternity and during his junior year wrote the twenty-fifth anniversary history of his chapter, Psi Upsilon.

He entered college with the ambition to become a Methodist minister like his father and, although he came to a new formulation of the meaning of being a Christian while at Rochester, he did not decide against the ministry until after

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he began his graduate studies at Boston University. He moved toward nonconformity gradually. Looking back he could identify no single climatic or emotional revolt, but rather a series of episodes, each of which deepened the separation between the assurances on which he had been raised and the convictions that sustained his mature life.[58]

The first turning point came with his undergraduate study of biology. His teacher, Professor Harrison E. Webster, led his students to an intellectual enjoyment of the meticulous care with which Darwin organized his empirical data in The Origin of Species.[59] Increasingly, Coe found the authority of the scientific method which Webster held up to his students for their admiration to be in conflict with the authorities of scripture and church, although the contrast between the two may not have been so great during his undergraduate years as Coe later described it. Even in his 1938 essay he indicated that he moved slowly away from the orthodoxy of his Methodist boyhood home.[60] However, two events of his college years indicate that his intellectual development was marked by points of crisis and resolution which were decisive for his whole subsequent development.

In those years the Methodist Church still emphasized its traditional teaching that God granted an experience of salvation to those who genuinely sought it. Typically the experiences came at mid-adolescence for youth raised in the church. Remembering that Reverend Coe had not experienced salvation until his twentieth year, Coe and his family may not have been troubled by the fact that he left for college still without "an inward testimony." However, despite Coe's fervent prayers, even the first years of college passed without his experiencing anything. Always reticient about himself, Coe's description of this time of yearning expectation is exceptionally brief, but it does convey how deeply he experienced the struggle to find certainty. The turmoil ended when Coe made a conscious decision to ask no longer for the spiritual certainty that eluded him. Resolutely putting to one side the question of whether or not he had been accepted by God, Coe committed his own life to the "Christian way." Breaking with the tradition of his church and his family, Coe counted himself a Christian on the basis of his own ethical decision.[61]

Although denied a religious experience in the form he had been taught to look for it, Coe did receive an unanticipated experience of rebirth. In a fine phrase of John Dewey's, he was "reborn into the life of intelligence."[62] One Sunday morning at Rochester he solemnly espoused the scientific method vowing to follow it wherever it might lead.[63] Coe thus joined the ranks of those who in increasing numbers were finding their security in methods of inquiry, of observation, of experience, of forming and following hypotheses. Their attitude, Dewey once wrote, was "though this method slay me, yet will I trust it."[64] In the scientific method of attaining and testing beliefs, Dewey continued, "they rest in intellectual and emotional peace." Dewey, whose experience in a biology classroom at the University of Vermont so closely paralleled

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Coe's own,[65] accurately measured the intensity of commitment which the scientific method held out for those of his generation. Certainly it is true of Coe that after that Sunday morning he rested in intellectual peace. Everything he wrote indicates that his decision for science during his college years did bring a clarity of vision and a constancy of purpose into his life which never deserted him. All his writings reveal Coe as a man of method, of will, and of settled conviction. Yet in the scripture Dewey paraphrased there is a hint of the high cost of Coe's intellectual peace. It cost him the faith of his childhood and the deep spiritual longings of his adolescence. The new faith was as rigorous as the old and we catch something of the discipline it imposed upon him in his comment years later that he would not school his heart against the hope of immortality as long as his hope was truly moral and social.[66] But the last word on the significance of his college decisions rightfully belongs to Coe himself. At the age of seventy-five he wrote he was still "buoyantly scientific."[67] In the words of the poem he quoted at so many points in his books, the decisions made at Rochester permitted him to keep open "the soul's east window of divine surprise."[68]

In 1884, Coe, still looking forward to a career in the ministry, began a three-year bachelor of divinity program at Methodist Boston University. It would be interesting to know Coe's first impressions of the city so proudly called by its citizens "the hub of the universe," but nowhere in his writings

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did he ever record his reactions to Boston or any of the other cities where he subsequently lived and taught. Although throughout his career Coe analyzed the conditions of modern urban living and their impact upon religious attitudes, neither in his first contact with Boston, or, in 1892, when he moved to a suburb of Chicago; nor, in 1909, when he moved to New York City, did the distinctive lifestyle of a particular city seem to hold any fascination for him. Coe lived in the great cities of America from 1884 to 1929, but he never seemed to become a part of them; never did the texture of his thought seem to reflect the complex design woven into the warp and woof of the polyglot American city. While a student at Boston University, Coe did participate with other students in a settlement house program,[69] but the plight of the industrial poor of Boston never evoked from him a passionate response like that of Edward Bellamy who described in the opening and closing chapters of Looking Backward: 2000-1887, the economic crises and the increasing class tension which marked the life of Boston in the 1880's. Bellamy summed up the meaning of a day's observation of conditions among the poor of Boston in the words: "I have been in Gotgotha . . . I have seen Humanity hanging on a cross."[70] Coe's deepening awareness of the social meaning of Christianity did not come from his personal interaction with the city and its people, but from his interaction with a theological tradition profoundly influenced by the Enlightenment. Therefore, in order to understand aright the influences which were determinative for Coe's intellectual

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development, we must turn our attention away from the city itself and focus instead upon the curriculum of Boston University's School of Theology in the eighties.

During these years at Boston Coe received what can best be described as a negative education. At this time Coe took up the decisive positions which led him to move further and further from developments within biblical and theological scholarship and closer to developments within philosophy and psychology. Yet the confidence with which he embraced the latter disciplines was nourished in part by the liberal Protestant consensus which was then emerging from biblical study and theology. To outline Coe's studies at Boston is to outline the way in which biblical study emancipated him from the traditional authority of scripture and theological study emancipated him from the long tradition of metaphysics in Christian thought.

In later years Coe remembered with great appreciation the impact upon his thinking made by Professor Hinckley G. Mitchell, Professor of Old Testament.[71] Coe admired the scholarly method and the courage with which Mitchell took up the difficult task of examining biblical literature in the light of literary and historical criticism. Coe began his Old Testament studies with Mitchell in the very period during the 1880's when scholars seemed to have reached a consensus on the historical development of the Old Testament literature. A brief review of the history of the critical study of the Old Testament up to that time will clarify certain emphases which then were dominant, and which, to a large extent, remained dominant in the thinking of Coe throughout his life.

As early as the eighteenth century there were indications that critical historical study, free from all theological assumptions, would open up a new perspective on the Old Testament.[72] In 1753, Jean Astruc proposed that the first five books of the Old Testament, traditionally ascribed to Moses, were in reality the work of several authors. He identified the interchangeable use of two Hebrew words for the diety, Eloihim and Yahweh, as a possible clue to multiple authorship. In 1805, a scholar established Deuteronomy 12-26 as "the Book of the Law" discovered in the Temple during the reign of Josiah. Herman Hupfeld isolated what he called "the foundation document," or P, in 1853. In 1865, K. H. Graf[73] summarized a century of Old Testament scholarship as having removed the myth of Mosaic authorship and having substituted for Moses four authors (or "schools"): J and E (both dating from the 9th and 8th centuries, B.C.E.), D (dating from the 7th century, B.C.E.) and P (dating from the time of Ezra in the 5th century, B.C.E.). Although skillfully interwoven by various editors or redactors, the special characteristics of each document made it possible to trace it throughout the Pentateuch. Based on the literary evidence, Graf postulated three successive stages in Israel's religious development: first, a stage of primitive religion (J and E); second, a stage of spiritual religion inaugurated by the great eighth century prophets (D); and lastly, the stage of late ritualistic and legalistic religion formulated by the priests (P). This "Grafian hypothesis" transferred the Mosaic law from the beginning of Israel's history to its end. Israel's religious history could no longer be read as a struggle to maintain an ideal system established by divine revelation as her authoritative guide from the beginning; instead, it took on the character of gradual growth from the simple to the more complex. The evolutionary formula, so dominant in the total thought of the nineteenth century, was thus reflected in Old Testament studies as well.

In 1883, Julius Wellhausen, the acknowledged giant among biblical critics, published his major work, Prolegomena to the History of Israel.[74] Consciously omitting all theological interpretations from his work, Wellhausen just as consciously based his exposition on the evolutionary view of history. Wellhausen accepted Graf's hypothesis that the really formative period of Israel's religion began, not with Moses, much less with Abraham, but with the great writing prophets of the eighth century. The prophets taught that the supreme law of the whole world was the justice of God. Based on that standard they sought a total transformation of Israel's social, economic, and religious life. The lofty principle which transformed the primitive religion of Israel was thus a principle of social justice so comprehensive that it led the prophets on to an understanding of monotheism: one Universal God as the source and authority for one universal standard of justice for all people. The combined weight of the interpretation of

Graf and Wellhausen gave great authority to the teaching that Israel's literature itself bore witness to the evolutionary character of her religious development. The prophets were no longer interpreted as those who looked backward to the Mosaic law or forward to a Messiah; they were seen as the creative center of what was distinctive in Israel's faith. The prophets had been led by their concern for social obligation and social relationships to a genuine monotheism which had not previously characterized Israel's faith.[75]

The decision which Coe made at Rochester to seek God in the ethical will could only have been reinforced as he studied these results of a century long investigation of the literature of the Old Testament. When scholars of the magnitude of Graf and Wellhausen asserted that anonymous scribes and not Moses wrote the Pentateuch, Coe, like so many of his generation, believed the scholars.[76] But the scholars were not merely describing the history of the composition of the literature of the Old Testament; their description of the process of compilation led them on to an interpretation of the meaning of the literature which was nothing other than a new theory of revelation. Revelation was no longer conceived as a divine initiatory act standing at the beginning of Israel's history; it was now interpreted as a progressive disclosure of divine truth which did not antedate human experience but was the finest fruit of that experience itself. Revelation could now be interpreted as theological reflection upon the ethical imperatives of the great writing prophets of Israel. Coe's personal decision to place ethical commitment first in his quest for religious certainty now had the sanction of the actual order of revelation described by the critics.

Even more decisive for Coe's intellectual development than his study with Professor Mitchell was his study with Borden Parker Bowne, professor of theology and philosophy at Boston, who, until his death in 1910, was the foremost philosopher within American Methodism. Through both his teaching and his numerous books, Bowne influenced a whole generation of Methodist ministers and laity.[77] Bowne's brand of idealism was firmly within what Coe called "the ancient tradition" that the world has meaning and that this meaning can be known.[78] He maintained human freedom against all deterministic interpretations of natural law and resisted sensationalism and associationism and whatever else analyzed away the real unity of the mind. For Bowne, the only reality in the universe was personal.[79]

Bowne's philosophy was an expression of a major movement within Protestant thought which reversed the traditional order of theological discussion by placing axiological considerations first and metaphysical knowledge second. A brief review of developments with Protestant thought from the time of Kant to the 1880's will outline this dominant tendency and place Bowne and Coe's thought in historic perspective.[80]

While denying the ability of the theoretical reason to know God, Kant pointed to man's profoundest feelings as the

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basis of his practical religious convictions and moral conduct. In effect, his philosophy offered Protestant theologians a way around the eighteenth century rationalist critique of religion which they were not slow to follow up. If theologians could no longer begin with the truths of cognition, they could, and did, begin with the truths established by consciousness. The greatest Protestant theologian of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), rejected the conception of both orthodox theologians and rationalists that religion was assent to truth defined as knowledge. The theologians, of course, were concerned about knowledge received through revelation; the rationalists, on the other hand, sought knowledge amenable to the canons of human reason. Schleiermacher in his first major work, Addresses on Religion to Its Cultured Despisers, delivered in 1799, argued that religion belonged to the realm of feeling and not to the realm of knowing. Rejecting a definition of religion as a body of truth, whether certified by revelation or rationality, Schleiermacher also rejected the notion that religion was a system of conduct while affirming that both belief and conduct flow from religion. His famed definition of religion was succinct: religion is the consciousness of absolute dependence.[81] In Schleiermacher's theology consciousness of need is the foundation on which religion rests and not absolute truths of any kind. In developing his theology, Schleiermacher interpreted traditional Christianity in such a way as to bypass the rationalist critique of the older generation of deists while making it at the same time responsive to the vital surge of feeling which suffused German culture as the nineteenth century began.

Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889), often acknowledged the architect of Protestant liberalism, sought far more radically than Schleiermacher to break the traditional dependence of theology upon metaphysics. He was supremely the theologian of religious values, not religious knowledge. Ritschl incorporated into his theology the theory of knowledge advocated by the Kantian philosopher, Rudolph Hermann Lotze.[82] Lotze, in his Metaphysik (1841), asserted that "the beginning of metaphysics is not in metaphysics itself, but in ethics." "I am still convinced," he wrote in 1879, "that I am right in seeking the ground of what is in what ought to be." Following Kant, Lotze held that things in themselves can never be known; they can only be known in their activities or attributes which are themselves only encountered in experience where they affect conduct. In effect, knowing becomes a value judgment. As a result of Ritschl's influence, Lotze's epistemology became widespread among Protestant theologians and philosophers. Borden Parker Bowne studied under Lotze in the 1870's prior to coming to Boston University in 1876.[83] Bowne dedicated his 1882 book on metaphysics to Lotze and acknowledged in the Preface that his conclusions "are essentially those of Lotze" and that "so far as their character is concerned, there would be no great misrepresentation in calling them Lotzian."[84] Thus through his teacher, Bowne, Coe was in direct communication with a Protestant theological tradition which took its rise with Kant's critique of the pure reason and culminated in Ritschl who reduced the assertions of classical theology to value judgments.

In a memorial written just after Bowne's death in 1910, Coe summarized the legacy of his teacher. Bowne tackled the problem which Coe saw as central for all who were in the idealist tradition. Coe wrote that in Bowne's philosophy, idealism at last came down to earth "by taking up as its task an analysis of the logical conditions for the completion of our life as rational and moral beings" and surrendered the notion that it could trace "the structure of the universe in the structure of our logical understanding." Bowne assumed that "the only kind of world in which human life can fully realize itself is a world of persons, a divine-human society."[85] Coe learned from Bowne to define the process by which human beings move from their consciousness of religious need to religious faith as rational in the deepest sense of the term reason. From his teacher, too, Coe learned to think of natural processes and religion itself as under law and yet at the same time to think of them under categories of freedom and personality.

Over the years, however, Coe's estimate of the empirical factor in Bowne theology and philosophy lessened, while his awareness of Bowne's apologetic interests increased. Writing in 1922, Coe still spoke approvingly of the fundamental empirical quality of Bowne's primary procedures. Bowne's dialectic, he wrote,

> . . . was consciously secondary and defensive. . . . It did not profess to discover or demonstrate the real but only to remove obstacles from the real and from the perception of it as real. We are to find and know reality by action and interaction, by giving play to our sense of need, by contemplating historical developments and judging values; by revising thought and conduct and trying again.[86]

By 1937, however, Coe came to the conclusion that both Bowne's philosophy and his theology were dependent for their validity upon "a primary discipline," apologetics, which took its conclusions for granted from the outset. Coe summed up his mature evaluation of his study of theology under Bowne as "one great petitio principii or 'begging the question.'"[87]

But Bowne's personalism was a lifelong legacy which Coe never repudiated. Bowne's interpretation of personalism nourished not only a belief in God as cosmic person, but also belief in him as the immanent spirit of the world organism. Bowne taught that the universe itself finally is "immaterial, conscious and personal."[88] For Bowne, the critical question which evolution posed was not the question of the origin of man and the universe, but the question of their purposefulness, a question which he answered by pointing to a divine spirit at work in and through nature. Bowne's emphasis upon personalism combined with his Lotzian epistemology made an indelible impression upon the philosophy of Coe.

The willingness with which Coe responded to Bowne's philosophy in the 1880's can be heightened if we contrast it with the reaction of a leading figure in the neo-orthodox movement, Paul Tillich, who began his theological education

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in 1908, just twenty years after Coe completed his studies at Boston. Tillich, in an autobiographical sketch, remembered that the students of his day rebelled against the predominant Ritschlianism of their professors. "We wanted being," he recalled.[89] But Coe, in the 1880's, was not troubled by the primacy of axiological interest in the thought of Bowne or those upon whom he was dependent. Borden Parker Bowne's philosophy was fully satisfactory to Coe, who wanted primarily to know the meaning or value of religion for life. From student days to his last essay, "My Search for What Is Worthwhile,"[90] written in the year he died, Coe never wavered from a definition of religion as value. He always sought to retain objectivity for values, but he believed the content of religion to be nothing more and nothing less than experienced values.

Before he completed his bachelor of divinity course in 1887, Coe's academic interest shifted decisively from theology to philosophy and he decided upon a career in teaching rather than the ministry.[91] But he remained on at Boston during the year 1887-1888 studying philosophy under Bordon Parker Bowne and reading in world religions under Boston's president, William F. Warren.[92] There came to him, however, at the very end of his divinity course, what he later with uncharacteristic emotion called "his word of destiny." In 1886, he met Sadie Knowland of Alameda, California, who was studying voice and piano at Boston University. They were engaged just before his graduation and he recalled years later that when he delivered the graduation oration for his class in Boston's old Tremont

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Temple he was alive only to her presence in the vast audience.[93]

He was now committed to the profession of teaching and she to her music, but both together re-examined the whole problem of life's work when what Coe called "an urgent call to missionary service in China" came. Coe never elaborated on this call, noting only that they decided together that "the call of duty was not China-ward, after all." They were married in September, 1888, and spent the next two years at the University of Los Angeles where Coe held "a humble post" teaching philosophy. They married with a mutual understanding of her ambition to have a career in music and Coe wrote that neither of them for a moment regretted it. "To work side by side in our respective professions," he wrote, "seemed to us to be at once destiny and duty and highest happiness." Both, however, longed for study abroad and were overjoyed when word came that Coe had been appointed Joseph Sleeper traveling fellow of Boston University for the year 1890-91. Coe elected to study at the University of Berlin and so they turned their faces toward Germany, in Coe's words, "the Mecca of the student" in those years.[94] At Berlin, Sadie Coe found teachers who skillfully developed her talent as a pianist; but Coe never acknowledged the direct influence of any particular professor or study at the University of Berlin upon his own thought. But it is significant that Coe thus rounded out his formal education at a German university renowned at the time for its scholarly contributions to religious liberalism.

The foremost scholar of the University of Berlin in the 1890's was the church historian, Adolph Harnack, whose seven volume history of dogma was issued during Coe's graduate years.[95] Harnack taught that Christianity had been corrupted by dogmatizing, a bad habit which he believed the church had taken over from the Greeks once it had left the Jewish culture that gave it birth.[96] The study of the history of dogma, according to Harnack, gave the church the very best means of freeing itself from dogmatic Christianity. By tracing in meticulous detail the history of the development of dogma, Harnack hoped to hasten what he believed to be an inevitable historical process by which Christianity emancipated itself from dogma.

Harnack ended his multivolume history of dogma with the Reformation. How can there possibly be "a history of dogma in Protestantism," he asked, "in view of Luther's 'Prefaces to the New Testament' and in view of his writings on the principles of the Reformation?"[97] Harnack answered his own question with the assertion that the centuries long attempt to build an objective, authoritative mold for Christianity came to an end with the Reformation. The significance of the Reformation was that it recaptured faith as experience acting directly upon human life and conduct. In replacing a dogmatic Christianity with a Christianity which expressed itself in moral action, Harnack, despite his admiration for Luther, created a Protestantism more different from the Reformation than the Reformation was from the Catholicism against which it revolted. Harnack, "the most famous of all the Ritschlians,"[98] gave the authority of historical legitimacy to Protestant liberalism. Armed with Harnack's reconstruction of church history, the liberals could assert that what seemed new in Christian thought was really the old, and what seemed to be the old tradition was really an alien accretion to the faith. In his famous phrase, Harnack used church history to overcome Christian dogma.[99]

In 1892, in the shadow of Harnack at the University of Berlin, the seat of European religious liberalism, Coe at thirty years of age ended his formal studies. His early life had been spent in a community marked by revivalism and millennialism; his family had upheld the Methodist legacy of disciplined piety and inward experience of salvation; while his formal education emphasized the values of scientific method in the scholarly study of religion. All of these influences were to blend together in his own philosophy. Although denied a decisive religious experience himself, he was all his life fascinated by the meaning of mystical experience. Although he moved far from revivalism and millennialism, he retained all his life the confidence that human and social life could be transformed and renewed. And finally, the meaning of his long career can be summed up as his attempt to apply the scientific method to the study of religion.

By 1892 Coe was a post-Enlightenment Protestant in every respect. While he affirmed no creed, he completely assumed the normative power of the principles of continuity, autonomy, and dynamism as they applied to the world of nature and to religion. However, in Coe's liberalism there was still a residium of the revival piety of his youth; he was, he wrote when he was seventy-five, an evangelical liberal.[100] Although his liberalism led him far from the historic dogma of the Incarnation, Coe always identified the origin of his faith with the event, the evangelion, of Jesus of Nazareth.

According to the ordinary Methodist usage of the term during his boyhood and youth, Coe never became a Christian since he never received an experience of salvation;[101] and according to the standards of the neo-orthodox theologians of the late 1930's, he was not within the Christian tradition since he departed from historic doctrines which they believed defined the perimeters of Christian thought.[102] Despite these negative judgments which surrounded both the beginning and the ending of his career, Coe never lost a robust faith in the rightness of his own understanding of the Christian faith acquired during the years of his collegiate and graduate study. When he completed his formal studies at Berlin in 1892, he was convinced that a Christian could neither be defined by an appeal to a particular kind of religious experience nor by an appeal to the authority of certain kinds of doctrines. His education led him to the conviction that Christianity expressed itself as activity directed by social and moral values. The remainder of his career was to be spent identifying social and moral values and their rootage in the human consciousness itself.

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Photographs[103] of Coe show him aging slowly and with practically no alteration of style in dress or facial expression over a fifty year period. A lean, wiry, intense, intellectual man, he looked much the same at eighty as he did at thirty. A man of vigorous habits, a skilled sailor and an experienced camper, Coe's set face and steel rimmed glasses reveal only the man of books and settled convictions. Coe's love of the out of doors was remembered by his friends, but is absent from his books, which reflect his life-long preoccupation with the world of ideas. He was to spend forty summers in his private camp in Maine--and twenty winters in New York City--but neither echo in any authentic or immediate way in his writings. As psychologist and educator his main teaching was that experience begets ideas, but a biographer following Coe's development in published and personal writing must conclude that in his life ideas begat ideas in a very legitimate and orderly line of succession.

A biographer has to be content to recreate that portion of Coe's life in which he left evidence, namely his intellectual life. But as Coe himself understood, there are "inherent satisfactions" in thinking itself. Much of Coe's life was given over to the "pleasurable thrill of endeavoring to think things through."[104] It is to that endeavor as it applied to psychology, religion, and education that we now turn.

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CHAPTER II FOOTNOTES

1. George Albert Coe, The Religion of a Mature Mind (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1902).

2. Ibid., Chap. X, "Salvation by Education," pp. 299-300.

3. Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought and The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955); Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School.

4. Kenneth Cauthen, The Impact of American Religious Liberalism, with a Foreword by Jaroslav Pelikan (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

5. Arthur M. Schlesinger, "A Critical Period in American Religion, 1876-1900," Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society LXIV (1932): 523-537; reprinted in Schlesinger's Rise of the City, 1876-1900 (New York: Macmillan Co., 1933).

6. Cauthen, Impact of American Religious Liberalism, pp. 4-5; Perry Miller summed up the change in the phrase, "Sinners in the Hands of a Benevolent God," Nature's Nation (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967). The internal development within Protestant theology was described as a movement "from providence to progress" by Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America (New York: Dial Press, 1970), and as a movement "from Puritanism to Pragmatism" by Francis P. Weisenburger, Ordeal of Faith: The Crisis of Church-Going America, 1865-1900 (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).

7. Cauthen, Impact of American Religious Liberalism, pp. 3-25; see also Karl Barth, Protestant Thought From Rousseau to Ritschl: Being the Translation of Eleven Chapters of "Die Protestantische Theologie Im 19. Jahrhundert" (New York: Harper and Bros., 1959).

8. George P. Michaelides, "A One-Time Secretary," Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 101-102.

9. Cauthen identified two major groups within liberalism, the evangelical liberals and the modernistic liberals in Parts 2 and 3 of his Impact of American Religious Liberalism.

10. Ahlstrom, Chap. 46, "The Golden Age of Liberal Theology," in A Religious History of the American People, pp. 763-784; Ahlstrom acknowledged his dependence on Cauthen, n. 12, p. 783.

11. As early as 1883, Theodore T. Munger, in The Freedom of Faith (Boston, 1883) used the phrase "the new theology" to describe the fundamental reorganization of American Protestantism brought about by science, evolution, and historical criticism.

12. Cauthen, Impact of American Religious Liberalism, quoted Henry P. Van Dusen's judgment that continuity was the major positive principle of the liberal mind, pp. 6-11.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-20.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Immanuel Kant (1784) answered his question by asserting that the Enlightenment was "the liberation of man from his self caused state of minority which is the incapacity of using one's understanding without the direction of another," "Was ist Aufklarung," trans, by A. F. M. Willich, Kant's Essays and Treatises, 2 vols. (London, 1798).

16. Barth, Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl, Chap. I; Paul Tillich, A History of Christian Thought, 2nd ed. rev. and ed. by Carl E. Braaten (New York: Harper and Row, 1968). On the influence of revivalism on American religion and culture, see Perry Miller, The Life of the Mind in America from the Revolution to the Civil War (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1965), and "The Religion of the Heart," pp. 55-116 in Hofstadter's Anti-Intellectualism in American Life. William Gerald McLoughlin has a narrower focus on the revivalists themselves in Modern Revivalists: From Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1959).

17. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, pp. 295-313.

18. Immanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason and Other Writings in Moral Philosophy, tr. and ed. with an introduction by Lewis White Beck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).

19. Cauthen, Impact of American Religious Liberalism, p. 24.

20. Coe prepared a brief biographical sketch which can be found in the Coe collection at Yale Divinity School, XIPP, n.d. The collection of his papers yields little information beyond what can be found in his published writing. Coe prepared

"A Sketch of My Life," for The Classmate (February 11, 1933), an alumni periodical published by Rochester University. Hugh Hartshorne, professor at Yale Divinity School and a younger colleague of Coe's provided Woodie with some biographical detail included in Woodie's "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation." Coe described his intellectual pilgrimage in "My Own Little Theatre," in Vergilius Ferm, ed., Religion in Transition (New York: Macmillan Co., 1937). Coe was listed in Who's Who in America (1926-1927), ed. by Albert Nelson Marquis (Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1926) and Jaques Cattell and E. E. Ross, Leaders in Education: A Biographical Directory, 3rd ed. (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Science Press, 1948), p. 204. Autobiographical fragments also appear in his Preface to The Psychology of Religion (1916) and "The Assault Upon Liberalism," Religious Education XXXIV (April-June 1939): 85-92.

21. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre."

22. Reverend T. W. Conable, History of the Genesee Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church from Its Organization by Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree in 1810 to 1884, 2nd ed. (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1885) gave full details of the Conference for the period. Biographical material on Reverend G. W. Coe, George Albert's father, is found in the Appendix of Conference Biography, p. 759.

23. Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950) gave special attention to Genesee County on pp. 5-6, 10-11, 35, 51, 70, 264, 301-303.

24. Ibid., p. 3 f.

25. Full details on the mood of the Genesee Valley are found in Cross, Chap. 18, "Utopia Now," pp. 341-352; the scripture passage referred to is Acts 1:5 (R.S.V.) where the disciples' question concerning the kingdom is parried with Jesus' statement "it is not for you to know times or seasons."

26. Conable, History of Genesee Annual Conference, pp. 628, 699-700. See also Richard M. Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1961) for a discussion of Nazaritism within Methodism, pp. 264-266. Eventually the Nazarites left the Methodist fold forming the Church of the Nazarene in 1908, p. 266.

27. Cameron, Methodism and Society, p. 264.

28. The Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church with an Appendix (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1860) recommended that all those within the faith--and those "groaning so to be"--should possess a copy of The Discipline.

29. John Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950).

30. Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo: A Biography (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) explored the sources of Augustine's pessimism in his controversy with a perfectionist group of his own day, the Donatists, and his experience of Rome's political and military decline, pp. 212-225 and 299-312.

31. John Dillenberger, ed., John Calvin: Selections from His Writings (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1971). See Dillenberger's Introduction, pp. 1-20. Also Book IV, Chap. 20, "Civil Government" in Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. by Henry Beveridge, Vol. II (London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 1953).

32. Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation, 1 vol. ed. (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1949), especially Chap. 9, "The Kingdom of God and the Struggle for Justice," pp. 244-286.

33. R. N. Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934) and Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, trans. by Norman P. Goldhawk (London: Epworth Press, 1962).

34. Cameron, Methodism and Society, p. 265.

35. Coe's dedication to his mother, The Religion of a Mature Mind.

36. An autobiographical allusion in Coe's A Social Theory of Religious Education (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1917), n. 1, p. 177.

37. Ibid., p. 214. A possible reference to his father may be hidden in an anecdote recounted in Education in Religion and Morals (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1904), p. 271: "A father who felt constrained to punish a small son for infraction of a command prefaced his act with the following explanation: 'My boy, I do not like to punish you, but it is my duty to do so, for God had delegated to me the authority and the responsibility of governing this family.' The small boy was at first awed by the thought that his father represented God, and thereby his observation of his father's conduct was quickened. The result was a conviction

that the father was mistaken concerning his prerogative, for all the facts went to show that in family government, as in other affairs, he employed his own judgment and sometimes yielded to his own impulses." Coe's silence about his family may well be due merely to a highly developed sense of privacy or it may be due to a rejection of his family, its values and memories. In his personal reminiscence of his wife, he referred frequently to her family and visits with them, never to his own, *Sadie Knowland Coe: A Chapter in a Life* (privately printed, 1906).

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 222.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

40. Coe, *Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 357.

41. Coe, *The Spiritual Life: Studies in the Science of Religion* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1900), p. 160.

42. *The Classmate* quoted in Woodie, "G. A. Coe's Concept of Valuation," pp. 14-15.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

44. Originally published as an article with the title, "A Sphinx Attends a Meeting of the Psychological Sodality," Coe reprinted it as Chapter 6, "Has Psychology Undermined Our Self-Respect?" in *Motives of Men* (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1928), pp. 36-46.

45. Coe, *What is Religion Doing to our Consciences?*, pp. 105-114.

46. *The Classmate*, quoted in Woodie, "G. A. Coe's Concept of Valuation," pp. 14-15.

47. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 136.

48. James C. Bonbright, "Outdoor Activities," one of a group of memorial essays published after Coe's death in *Religious Education* XLVII (March-April 1952): 97-99.

49. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 86.

50. A reminiscence introduced by Coe to illustrate the movement from the sacred to the secular which he had witnessed during his own lifetime, *What is Religion Doing to Our Consciences?*, pp. 10-11.

51. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 342.

52. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 9.

53. Quoted in his first book, The Spiritual Life (1900), p. 248, and his last, What is Religion Doing to Our Consciences? (1943), p. 79, and frequently in the books between.

54. James Russell Lowell, "The Cathedral," in The Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1911), pp. 350-360.

55. David J. Hill, president of Rochester University, in The American College in Relation to Liberal Education (Rochester, 1889) made it clear that, although Rochester might call itself a university, it was still a college in the true and historic sense, p. 12. See also George E. Peterson, The New England College in the Age of the University (Amherst: Amherst College Press, 1964), p. 217 and Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History (New York: Random House, Inc., 1965), Chap. 12, "Dawning of a New Era," pp. 241-263.

56. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 92. Coe's papers in the Yale Divinity School collection indicate that he joined Psi Upsilon Fraternity at Rochester. He wrote its 25th anniversary history on February 12, 1883. Not until much later did he come to a penetrating criticism of the social mores of the young, see What Ails Our Youth? (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1925). At Rochester, the young conformist took it as a fact of social life that the sorority rushee who ate the toast with the squab was automatically disqualified, Motives of Men, p. 171.

57. Coe, What Ails Our Youth?, p. 51.

58. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," pp. 90-95.

59. Ibid., p. 95.

60. Ibid., p. 90.

61. Ibid., p. 93. In Motives of Men, p. 154, Coe noted that his entire life had been continuously identified with the church and he would not have had it otherwise.

62. John Dewey, "Fundamentals," The New Republic XXXVII (February 6, 1924): 275-276; 289-290.

63. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 95.

64. Dewey, "Fundamentals," pp. 275-276. In this article Dewey was reacting to the resurgence of religious conservatism in the 1920's. He noted that the religious conservatives scored a point in taking the term "the fundamentals" as a description of their emphasis. Dewey went on to outline

"the fundamentals" of a scientific understanding of life. Dewey reacted to the same phenomena of religious conservatism as expressed in the Dayton, Tennessee Scopes trial in "The American Intellectual Frontier," The New Republic XXX (May 10, 1922): 303-305; in the phrase quoted Dewey alluded to Job 13:15.

65. Curti, Social Ideas of American Educators, p. 501; Arthur G. Wirth, John Dewey as Educator: His Design for Work in Education, 1894-1904 (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966), p. 7.

66. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, Preface, p. xv.

67. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 103.

68. Lowell, "The Cathedral," quoted in "My Own Little Theatre," p. 103.

69. Coe, Sadie Knowland Coe: A Chapter in a Life, referred indirectly to friendships made while working in a Boston settlement house. Arthur Herbert Wilde, Northwestern University: A History, 1855-1905, 4 vols. (New York: Columbia Publishing Society, 1905), II, p. 252, noted that Coe participated in a Chicago settlement while a professor at Northwestern. Arthur Mann indicated the response many were making to Boston's social conditions in Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age: Social Reform in Boston, 1880-1900 (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1954). Coe never directly referred to the new forms of church ministry inspired by the social understanding of Christianity which Mann described, pp. 73-101.

70. Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward: 2000-1887, with a Foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: The New American Library, 1960) was first published in 1888. The quotation is from p. 215 of the 1960 edition. Also published in 1888 was a fictional account of the effect of German higher criticism upon the religious beliefs of a young Anglican clergyman written by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Robert Elsmere, edited and with an Introduction by Clyde de L. Ryals (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967). In the novel the clergyman abandons dogmatic Christianity for social work in the slums of London. The fact that "social Christianity" was already appearing in such widely read novels testifies to its general diffusion and acceptance among the educated classes. In a work of fiction which he published pseudonymously in 1884, Henry Adams has a leading layman of a fashionable New York church say that "now-a-days we must choose between weak doctrines and weak brains, and of the two, I prefer to let up on the Pentateuch," Ester: A Novel, reprinted in a facsimile edition with an Introduction by Robert E. Siller in 1938.

71. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 97. Later, on several occasions, Mitchell's tenure at Boston was jeopardized by his commitment to the new critical historical study of the Bible. Finally, in 1905, he was denied endorsement by the Methodist bishops at least two of whom had to sanction the appointment of theology professors at Methodist seminaries. See George H. Shriver, ed., American Religious Heretics: Formal and Informal Trials (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), pp. 151-152. Coe came to the defense of his former teacher in an article, "A Crisis in Methodism," The Outlook, LXXXI (December 16, 1905): 933-935.

72. The following summary is a condensation of the early chapters of Herbert F. Hahn, The Old Testament in Modern Research, expanded and with a Survey of Recent Literature by Horace D. Hammel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966). Hans-Joachim Kraus, Geschichte Der Historisch Kritischen Erforschung Des Alten Testaments Von Der Reformation Bis Zur Gegenwort (Duisburg-Ruhrert: Joh. Brendow und Sohn, 1956) argued that the origins of modern biblical criticism are to be found in Martin Luther's own critical approach to the scriptures.

73. K. H. Graf, Die Geschichtlischen Bucher Des Alten Testaments: Zwei Historisch-Kritische Untersuchungen (Leipzig, 1865).

74. Julius Wellhausen, Prolegomena Zur Geschichte Israels (Berlin, 1883); the English translation was published in Edinburgh in 1885. Wellhausen rejected the scriptural description of the patriarchial age as being far in advance of the actual primitive conditions which he argued must have existed in c. 1400 B.C.E. Wellhausen never revised his judgment even after the discovery of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets in 1887 indicated that the social intercourse among Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, and the petty states of Syria and Israel was extensive and the actual religious conceptions of the Semitic world well developed, Hahn, The Old Testament in Modern Research, pp. 89-90.

75. Coe's classmate at Rochester, Walter Rauschenbusch, built upon this interpretation in the first chapter, "The Historical Roots of Christianity: The Hebrew Prophets," in his Christianity and the Social Crisis, ed. by Robt. D. Cross (New York: Harper and Row, 1964; first published by Macmillan in 1907). See also W. Robertson Smith, The Prophets of Israel (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1882).

76. Walter Wink, The Bible in Human Transformation: Toward a New Paradigm for Biblical Study (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973) argued that biblical criticism in the late nineteenth century was a certain type of evangelism seeking a certain type of conversion: "Far more fundamentally than

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revivalism, biblical criticism shook, shattered, and reconstituted generation after generation of students, and became their point of entree into the 'modern world,'" pp. 14-15. In 1904 Coe wrote in Education in Religion and Morals: "One who appreciates the growth of the religious consciousness in Israel is not likely to be troubled with the question of inspiration," p. 264.

77. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, pp. 777, 782. Bowne's books were Studies in Theism (1879); Metaphysics: A Study in First Principles (1882); Introduction to Psychological Theory (1886); Christian Revelation (1898); The Immanence of God (1905); Personalism (1908). Francis John McConnell, Borden Parker Bowne: His Life and His Philosophy (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1929) wrote the only extended biography of Bowne. Bowne's Ph.D. dissertation was one of the earliest critiques of the social atomism of Herbert Spencer undertaken from a Christian point of view. Herbert Schneider wrote that Bowne was influential in bringing philosophical habits of thought to Methodist ministers formerly noted for their "evangelical fear and scorn" of philosophy. Schneider listed Coe as a "more recent champion" of Bowne's personalism, A History of American Philosophy, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 400-401.

78. Quoted from Coe's brief obituary of Bordon Parker Bowne in Journal of Philosophy VII (1910): 281-282.

79. Under Bowne's influence personalism spread widely in liberal circles. See H. Shelton Smith, et al., American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents, 2 vols. (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1960-1963), II, p. 258. See also Edgar S. Brightman, ed., Personalism in Theology: A Symposium in Honor of Albert Cornelius Knudson (Boston: Boston University Press, 1943).

80. Coe summarized the results of the movement in the Preface to his 1902 book, The Religion of a Mature Mind, noting that the impact of a century-long reconstruction in theology was a tendency to "simplify, socialize, and intensify the Christian life," p. 9. See also Karl Barth, Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl and Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church, 3rd ed. revised by Robert T. Handy (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1970).

81. Schleiermacher's celebrated definition of religion as the consciousness of absolute dependence is in the Introduction to Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsazen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt, 2 vols. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1830-1831). See also Gerhard Spiegler's discussion in The Eternal Covenant: Schleiermacher's Experiment in Cultural Theology (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 157-170. Excerpts from the 1799 lectures can be found in

Frederick Schleiermacher on Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers ed. by Rudolf Otto (New York: Harper and Row, 1958).

82. See W. H. Werkmeister, Historical Spectrum of Value Theories, 2 vols. (Lincoln, Nebraska: Johnson Publishing Co., 1970), I, pp. 16-20 for a description of Lotze's significance. The quotations are from Werkmeister, n. 1, p. 16 and p. 17.

83. Coe, Browne's obituary, Journal of Philosophy VII: 281-282.

84. Metaphysics: A Study in First Principles (New York: Harper and Bros., 1882).

85. Coe, "Borden Parker Bowne," The Methodist Review XCII (May 1910): 513-524.

86. Coe, "The Empirical Factor in Bowne's Thinking," in E. C. Wilm, ed., Studies in Philosophy and Theology by Former Students of Borden Parker Bowne (1922), pp. 18-19. This brief two-page article was written by Coe the year he resigned from the faculty of Union Theological Seminary and began his teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University.

87. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre." Coe is most critical of his philosophical and theological studies in this 1937 autobiographical essay published in Vergilius Ferm, ed., Religion in Transition. Bowne was accused, tried, and acquitted of heresy by the New York East Conference of the Methodist Church where he held his ministerial standing in April, 1904. See Harmon L. Smith, "Borden Parker Bowne: Heresy at Boston," in Shriver, ed., American Religious Heretics, pp. 148-187.

88. E. C. Wilm, "The Late Prof. Borden Parker Bowne," The American Journal of Theology XIV (1910): pp. 422-425.

89. Paul Tillich, "Is a Science of Human Values Possible?" in New Knowledge in Human Values, ed. by Abraham H. Maslow with a Foreword by Pitirim A. Sorokin (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1959), p. 191. In On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1966; first published as Part I in The Interpretation of History published by Scribner's in 1936), p. 52, Tillich noted that his own philosophical position was "developed in critical dialogue with neo-Kantianism" and the philosophy of value.

90. Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): pp. 170-176.

91. Although Coe never named the professor who influenced him to prepare for a career teaching philosophy rather than teaching theology or preparing for the ministry, it seems probable it was Borden Parker Bowne.

92. Record of Studies, School of Theology, Boston University, I, p. 24, quoted in Henry David Bremer's dissertation, "George Albert Coe's Contribution to the Psychology of Religion," Boston University, 1949, p. 60.

93. After her death in 1905, Coe published privately a moving tribute to his wife, Sadie Knowland Coe: A Chapter in a Life, in which he recounted their life together. It is Coe's only deeply personal autobiographical statement and even so it reveals more of Sadie than of Coe. Following quotations are all taken from this memorial essay.

94. Charles Franklin Thwing, Universities of the World (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911) noted that American students studying in Germany first went to Gottingen, then Heidleberg, and, at the end of the century, Berlin, p. 138.

95. Harnack's Dogmengeschichte was published in three volumes during the years 1886-1890. It was translated into English and published in seven volumes in 1894. In 1893, the author's own condensation was published in English under the title, Outlines of the History of Dogma. See the Introduction by Philip Rieff in Harnack's Outlines of the History of Dogma, trans. by Edwin Knox Mitchell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957). Wilhelm Pauck, in Harnack and Troeltsch: Two Historical Theologians (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968) quoted Troeltsch: "Harnack's Schrift ist gewissermassen das symbolische Buch fur die historisierende Richtung der Theologie," n. 7, p. 8.

96. Harnack, Outlines, p. 5.

97. Quoted in Pauck, Harnack and Troeltsch, p. 25.

98. The phrase is Ahlstrom's in A Religious History of the American People, p. 789.

99. Wilhelm Pauck, "The Significance of Adolf von Harnack's Interpretation of Church History," Union Theological Seminary Quarterly Review (January 1954), p. 15. Pauck, in Harnack and Troeltsch, p. 101, quoted from a Festschrift dedicated to Harnack on his seventieth birthday the judgment that for Harnack theology and church history coincide: "There are in the last resort no dogmatics and no Christology."

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100. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 99. However, Cauthen, The Impact of American Religious Liberalism, n. 11, p. 260, placed Coe among the modernistic liberals, among whom the most well-known would be Shailer Matthews, Douglas Clyde Macintosh, and Henry Nelson Wieman.

101. Conable, History of Genesee Annual Conference, passim, indicated how much a conversion experience was stressed during the period from the Civil War to the eighties in the Methodist Conference where Coe's father served as pastor.

102. H. Shelton Smith, in Faith and Nurture analyzed what he considered the theological inadequacy of Coe's liberalism from a neo-orthodox point of view. See also Robert W. Lynn's judgment in "The Uses of History," Religious Education LXVII: 83-89, that Smith's appeals to "the Gospel" and "the Christian faith," while vague and undefined, had behind them "the rising cultural power of neo-orthodoxy"; significant, too, is an earlier exchange between Coe and Reinhold Niebuhr, "Two Comments," The Christian Century L (March 15, 1933): 362-364.

103. Nine photographs of Coe from infancy to old age are reproduced in Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952) between pages 112 and 113. A self-portrait taken shortly before his death is reproduced on the frontispiece of this memorial issue.

104. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 90.

CHAPTER III

THE RELIGION OF A MATURE MIND

While still in Berlin, Coe received an invitation to become professor of philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Although elated at the news, the Coes found that it presented the first real challenge to their pre-marital contract to give equal consideration to the career plans of each. Sadie desired to stay in Europe for two more years to prepare herself fully for a professional career teaching piano and music theory, but the position at Northwestern was dependent upon Coe's beginning to teach in the fall of 1892. Finally, they accepted the necessity of a separation. At the end of the summer, Coe returned to America alone; the next summer he and Sadie traveled together in Europe, but she did not join him at Northwestern until he began his third year of teaching in the fall of 1894.[1]

Organized in 1833 under the sponsorship of the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Church, Northwestern in 1892 retained many ties with the denomination although the faculty, trustees, and students were already questioning practices long traditional in the church-related college. Even before Coe came, the compulsory eight o'clock chapel had been abandoned and Northwestern was searching for an alternative symbol to express its religious orientation.[2] A new president, Henry

Wade Rogers, also took office in the fall of 1892. In his inaugural address he well conveyed the transitional mood of a Methodist college moving toward non-sectarian university aspirations. Northwestern, Rogers declared,

> . . . is governed by the principle that Christianity is true, that it is the basis of our civilization, and the beginning of wisdom. But I do not believe that it was ever intended by the founders of this institution of learning that it was to be narrowly sectarian or designed to teach that any one church possesses all religious truth.[3]

Recalling the birth of Methodism among Wesley and his associates at Oxford, he urged that "the church born at Oxford" regard its mission as incomplete until it had an Oxford of its own. As a vigorous, sometimes arbitrary leader, Rogers during the next decade presided over the still provincially minded college as it moved toward becoming Methodism's American Oxford.[4]

Thirty-six years later, Coe himself wrote about the challenge which was presented to the church-related colleges and universities of the 90's. He argued that they had a particular responsibility for transmitting the new knowledge in biology, psychology, and philosophy in such a way as to stimulate students to formulate a new theological perspective. In 1928, he wrote that for the two previous generations,

> . . . scholars have had before their eyes a vital contrast between religious traditions and scientific knowledge of the world and the Bible with the growth of new social needs and ideals. Here was a situation in which something needed to be done. Educational institutions were the places to which to look for initiative and leadership in making and supporting the necessary steps.[5]

The liberal Protestant perspective Coe would have had universities like Northwestern transmit rivaled in unity and scope the Thomist synthesis of the medieval university. As we have seen, he himself had been led to an intellectual appreciation of the comprehensiveness of the liberal religious vision during his own years of study. His experience led him to the belief that the church-related college was the appropriate place to meld the new knowledge in the natural and social sciences together into one consistent theological perspective. And, indeed, during his years at Northwestern, Coe's own thinking reached maturation. He fused his personalist philosophy, his experimental studies in psychology, and his theological perspective into a unique pragmatism which by 1908 he called "a faith-philosophy."

Although Northwestern's attempts to move toward restructuring its curriculum may have appeared modest to Coe writing more than thirty years later, its innovations were sufficient to bring it into critical notice in the 90's. An article surveying developments within higher education during the decade from 1890 to 1900 noted that at Michigan, Chicago, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Northwestern professors were all blasting away at "the rock of ages." "Whether the subject be a god or a gas, a syllogism or a star, the professor approaches it impersonally, critically determined to know the truth."[6] The article specifically named the young Professor Coe of Northwestern as one of this new breed of professors.

Coe's studies in the dynamics of the religious life caused him to become a controversial figure within Methodism by the end of the decade, but in his early years of teaching at

Northwestern Coe distinguished himself chiefly by his dedication. He threw himself into his teaching responsibilities with zest and enthusiasm. He and Sadie even designed their home in such a way that several rooms could be opened up into one large room for recitals and student meetings. For a number of years, Sunday discussions at the Coes were a regular feature of student life. Coe's moral and philosophical interests are reflected in the topics discussed at these gatherings which the Coes called "conversazioni." The "conversazioni" were so significant a part of student life that a historian of Northwestern listed them as an integral part of the religious program of the university.[7] Coe's second book, The Religion of a Mature Mind, partially grew out of these Sunday conversations with students.[8]

Nothing in Coe's biographical writings points to an interest in pedagogy prior to his coming to Northwestern. It may be that his interest in education was sparked sometime during his years of graduate study or it may be that he simply accepted the then normal academic responsibility for teaching pedagogy in conjunction with philosophy and psychology. Whatever his interest in education may have been at this early period, his interest in the new developments in studying psychology was immediately evident. He promptly introduced a course in physiological psychology and as soon as possible established a laboratory for experimental studies in psychology.[9] While eminent psychologists were at this time cautions in applying the discoveries of experimental psychology directly to life

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situations, Coe characteristically was quite willing to have the rapidly growing fund of psychological knowledge tested by its practical usefulness. This open attitude of Coe's had a decisive bearing on the career pattern of at least one of his students at Northwestern, Walter Dill Scott.

Scott arrived on campus as a freshman the fall Coe began to teach and ended his career as president of Northwestern from 1922 to 1939. Scott, who called Coe his best teacher, took two psychology courses under Coe; later, he studied under Wundt at Leipzig and Tichener at Cornell. Although he admired Wundt and Tichener greatly, he thought that they were "unyielding in their pursuit of pure knowledge as an end in itself."[10] Coe, however, was instrumental in stimulating Scott to apply psychology "to fields outside of pure thought and in the world of the living."[11] Scott returned from his graduate studies in 1900 to become Coe's associate in what by then had become the department of psychology and pedagogy. When Muensterberg of Harvard and Thorndike of Columbia both turned down an offer to collect and publish research on the application of psychology to the emerging field of advertising, Coe suggested Scott's name to the publisher and Scott accepted. Scott's _The Theory and Practice of Advertising_ (1902) was one of the early classics in the application of psychology to modern business methods.[12]

Coe's commitment to his teaching may account for the fact that he did not begin to publish until 1898. His early critical reviews reveal his interest in theology and philosophy merging into a predominantly psychological perspective; they reveal, too, wide acquaintance with the German and French literature in these fields. His first reviews were all published in the Philosophical Review: he reviewed The Evolution of the Idea of God in March, 1898; in May, a German work on the interaction between the body and the soul; and, in November, a study of the characteristic values of Greek and Hebrew culture.[13] These three works repeat motifs which ran throughout his graduate study: evolution, a historical approach to the study of metaphysical problems, and a scientific approach to the study of the religious consciousness.

Late in his life, Coe identified seven of his published articles as crucial for an understanding of his intellectual development.[14] Five of these seven articles were written while he was at Northwestern. His only empirical study, to be discussed in detail below, "The Dynamics of the Religious Life," appeared in 1899; "A Study in Spirituality" was published in 1900; the remaining three were all published in 1908. These articles which focused upon conversion and the meaning of mystical experience reflect, too, his involvement in what he called the gust of interest in adolescent studies which swept over many researchers following the publication in 1891 of an article by G. Stanley Hall on the religious growth of children and youth.[15] We can, however, trace more logically his intellectual development if we defer discussion of these early psychological studies and examine in some detail the philosophic assumptions of his initial personal idealism.

When Coe began his teaching career at Northwestern he defined himself primarily as a philosopher. Although trained in theology as well as philosophy, he never conceived of himself as a theologian because, as we have seen, he rejected during his student days what he believed was theology's congenital defect, i.e., its commitment of dogma. On his own admission his indifference to theology was so strong that he ceased even attempting to keep up with developments within the discipline. Similarly, by the time he left Northwestern in 1909, Coe ceased to think of himself as a philosopher and had shifted his academic interests to psychology and pedagogy. Later his move to Teachers College, Columbia, in 1922, signalled a re-focusing of his interests almost exclusively on the process of education. However, these successive shifts in academic concentration did not mean a contraction of Coe's intellectual interests, for, like Dewey, Coe believed that education was supremely the practical activity by which the adequacy of any philosophy was tested.[16] Coe himself described his career pattern as having been dictated by his lifelong quest to rid his thinking of all forms of authoritarianisms and dogma.[17]

Although during his Northwestern years, Coe moved decisively away from the metaphysics of the personal idealism of his teacher, Borden Parker Bowne, certain emphases of personal idealism remain characteristic of his later thought. Throughout his life and despite the shifts of his academic interests, the legacy of personalism continued to define the perimeters of

Coe's thought. Since it is this residual personalism which distinguished Coe's later pragmatism from Dewey's experimentalism, a brief analysis of personalism may be helpful at this point.

A. C. Knudson, one of Bowne's chief disciples, defined personalism as:

> The form of idealism which gives equal recognition to both the pluralistic and monistic aspects of experience and which finds in the conscious unity, identity and free activity of personality the key to the nature of reality and the solution of the ultimate problems of philosophy.[18]

Knudson, claiming that personalism, like pragmatism, was really a new name for some old ways of thinking, described elements in the thinking of Western philosophers from Plato to Hegel which were personalistic. However, the term "personalism" did not appear in the lexicon of philosophy until the twentieth century.

In 1903, Charles Renouvier's Le Personnalisme[19] was published and, in 1908, Borden Parker Bowne summarized his teaching of thirty years in his work, Personalism.[20] Bowne represented the dominant theistic wing in American personalism, but the movement itself was heterogeneous bringing together thinkers whose personalism was compatible with agnosticism, pantheism, and absolute idealism.[21] Charles Renouvier and George H. Howison were two whose personalism differed significantly from traditional theism.

Renouvier combined his personalism with a neo-Kantian relativism; rejecting absolutism of any kind, he opted for a relativistic view of the world. Such a view denies to the world the character of a closed system thus leaving the individual a measure of independent activity and true causality. According to Knudson, Renouvier taught that it is

> . . . only as we hold to the finiteness of God and the relative independence of man that we can have a valid basis for the belief in immortality. In such a system the individual asserts himself as a "real" factor, and hence may well be immortal.[22]

Renouvier saw in the absolute God of traditional theology the support of political despotism. He pronounced "the king of heaven" to be the last support of kings on earth and called upon modern man "to dethrone the Absolute" from religion as well as politics. He rejected the concept of a Kingdom of God and sought to substitute for it the concept of a republic or a cosmic democracy in which other persons besides God have their eternal place and rights. Renouvier's relative personalism had a direct influence upon William James, who acknowledged that Renouvier liberated him from "the monistic superstition" of traditional theism.[23]

George H. Howison's ethical or teleological personalism emphasized the divine as the final cause or end toward which everything moves, but rejected the traditional view which makes God the first cause in creation. Howison argued that persons are co-eternal with God: "He is simply the end, the goal, the ideal toward which they strive, and in this sense, and this sense only, is he their bond of union and the ground of their being."[24]

Unlike Renouvier's or Howison's interpretations of personalism, Bowne's theistic personalism was compatible at nearly

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all points with traditional Christian doctrine. In Bowne's metaphysics God remained the creator and "the one independent causal ground of the world";[25] however, he taught that God, in an act expressive of his sovereignty, voluntarily limited himself so that persons may possess a measure of true causality. Further, in contradistinction to traditional theology which interpreted creation from a realistic perspective, Bowne taught that the world created by God was a phenomenal order only. From Bowne's idealist perspective only persons were ontologically real. As another personalist, A. A. Pringle-Pattison, expressed it, "Inexplicable as man's personal agency is--nay, the one perpetual miracle--it is nevertheless our surest datum and our only clue to the mystery of experience."[26]

Bowne adopted the Lotzian doctrine of the empirical reality of the self as a substitute for the traditional notion of a substantial soul. The self, or person, in Lotze's philosophy, "is an ultimate, empirical reality, whose unity is given as basic to both experience and nature."[27] Bowne based his theism on this "transcendental empiricism" arguing that persons can only be caused by persons and that the ultimate cause or creator must be "at least personal."[28]

Bowne believed that personalism by affirming the empirical reality of persons overcame antinomies which rent asunder other philosophic systems. Identity and change, the one and the many, freedom and necessity were antinomies which beguiled abstract thought into fruitless debate, but were daily resolved in personal experience: ongoing personal experience unifies identity with change; a conscious unity with the multiplicity of events; and self-control with necessity. Conceiving ultimate reality as personal, Bowne believed that he had found in personalism the only answer to the questions raised by speculative thought.[29]

Despite Bowne's enormous influence upon Coe, it is important to mention that Coe never referred to him in The Religion of a Mature Mind, nor did he in his later books. This fact has to be balanced against the characteristic tendency of Coe to omit almost all references to other philosophers in his books. Just as his father is not mentioned in his few biographical statements, so, too, there is an absence of recognition of paternal figures in his intellectual life. This may account for the solitary quality which grows more marked in Coe's writing as his career progresses, making his last books for all their social relevance on one level seem strangely remote and detached.

Against this general tendency, Coe's references in his early writings to F. C. S. Schiller, the English personalist, are significant.[30] In both his 1904 essay on the philosophy of the religious education movement and his 1908 essay on pragmatism, Coe referred to Schiller while omitting any mention of Bowne. It was Schiller's emphasis upon individuality and indeterminancy which made him very attractive to James, and, perhaps, initially to Coe. In 1903 Schiller's Humanism[31] elaborated his theory that ideas are never known apart from the human experience in which they play a part. Schiller gave the name "humanism" to his brand of pragmatism because it was based precisely on this recognition of the decisive influence of human interests in all human thinking. His emphasis upon the true as that which proved its value in experience opened a way by which Coe could preserve value and personality without the apparatus of Bowne's metaphysics. Although Schiller's personal idealism may have provided the philosophic bridge to pragmatism for Coe, once over the bridge Coe turned away from the individual and subjective dimension of truth in Schiller's humanism and closer toward the social and objective dimension of Dewey's instrumentalism.[32]

Coe's personalism is most clearly evident in his second book, The Religion of a Mature Mind, published in 1902. Bowne was enthusiastic in his praise of the book; he wrote Coe that the book's sane and helpful approach would bring a better understanding of the truth of the Gospel.[33] The Chicago papers gave favorable reviews noting that Coe said nothing not heard in urban pulpits for years; but the reaction in the denominational press and rural newspapers was negative.[34] One hostile reviewer in a church periodical declared the book might better have been called "the irreligion of an immature mind": a comment which frankly delighted Coe.[35] According to the preface, portions of the book grew out of the talks Coe gave to students during his Sunday "conversazioni." Coe's style reflects this original setting: it is lofty, discursive, and hortatory combining a Lord's day solemnity with a modern awe of science to create a work of unremitting seriousness. It is no easy task for the modern reader to move beyond Coe's style to the substance of his thought. Once past the barrier of style, however, salient features of a personalistic approach to religion are easy to trace.

Prominent among these was Coe's emphasis upon the uniqueness and independence of religion. No development in science could ever jeopardize the central role of religion in human life. Science was essentially a function of the mind; and, while religion was amenable to reason, it did not draw its legitimacy from the intellect alone. It was the power of religion to unify and intensify value that Coe celebrated in this early work. According to him, attempts to reconcile science and religion were out-of-date in 1902. The new problem of the twentieth century was the problem of how to adjust the religious function and the scientific function. Coe argued that these two functions must be exercised by the same individuals: furthermore, he wrote,

> If religion should be reduced, as some would have it, to mere asthetic or ethical emotion; if its recognized sphere should be the imaginary rather than the true--some other side of our nature taking sole account of the real universe--religion would soon evaporate. The breath of its life is its consciousness of penetrating through mere appearance to something that can be absolutely relied upon because it is the reality of things . . . religious truth-seeking and scientific truth-seeking are required to stand side by side.[36]

The scientific spirit was in religion itself. "The instinct for religion cannot be separated from the impulse to know"; and, he continued,

> This is not to say that religion is primarily or chiefly an intellectual function. Religion is not due to a desire to explain the world, except as the need of

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> explanation enters as a factor into a more comprehensive need. But the aims of intellect and those of religion do certainly have a common focal point. Intellect aims to know things as they are; religion seeks to adjust the whole man to ultimate reality.[37]

Similarly, the scientific spirit contained the religious element. "The most characteristic thing about modern science is not its wondrous insight into the constitution of the universe, but rather its spirit of self abnegation and of devotion to ideal good. Purity of heart," he continued,

> . . . is as necessary in science as in religion, and it certainly is true that only those who become as little children can enter into the fullness of the kingdom. Here the lazy man, the conceited man, the self-willed man, and the insincere man are out of place. As scientific men we must love nothing merely because it is ours; the only ground of attachment to any idea is that it fits things as they are.[38]

According to Coe, the new world view brought into being by modern science was matched by a correspondingly great change in the Christian faith itself. In his own day, Coe saw Christianity as undergoing three great transformations: "First, the Christian life is being simplified; second, its ideals are being socialized; third, its motives are being intensified."[39] The hospitality of Bowne's philosophy toward specific Christian doctrines was reflected in Coe's willingness to simplify old doctrines without discarding the doctrine itself. A good example of this is Coe's interpretation of the historic doctrine of belief in Christ as signifying the assimilation of oneself to Christ's value scheme: "to accept Christ is to identify with his choices and values."[40] Later, Coe used the phrase "democracy of God" to describe the true meaning of a socialized

Christianity. From Kant's "kingdom of ends" to Renouvier's "republic of God" there is a straight line to Coe's concept of a divine human industrial democracy, a concept not fully elaborated upon until his 1917 work, A Social Theory of Religious Education, but present in incipient form in The Religion of a Mature Mind.

Like theistic personalists generally, Coe showed in this work a clear preference for the valuational argument for the existence of God. Among theists the argument that God is necessary because he preserves the moral value of human existence had been popular since Kant, and had almost completely displaced the cosmological and ontological arguments. Coe, in his use of this argument, was even willing to forego strict logic. He wrote in The Religion of a Mature Mind that "whether or not there is a God, there ought to be,"[41] moving thus boldly from the ought to the is because he believed atheism would have disastrous consequences for the higher spiritual interests of persons. For Coe, as for Bowne, theism was a necessary postulate to buttress the value placed upon persons.

Nothing is more characteristic of liberal Christianity or philosophical personalism than this emphasis upon the dignity and worth of human personality.[42] Reverence for human personality dominated Coe's thought; he asserted it was the most notable moral characteristic of his time. From his graduation oration at Rochester on "the personal element in history" to his last essay on his search for the worthwhile, Coe's writings show an undeviating devotion to personality as the supreme value in life. But while the relative personalism of Renouvier gave great scope to the true being of individuals, Coe's personalism with its early emphasis upon one Divine Person tended to slur over the reality of individuals and to dwell upon the personal as a norm. One perceptive reviewer wrote[43] that The Religion of a Mature Mind presented to the reader a norm in the process of definition. The premise of the book throughout was that the religious life of the individual, like the religious life of humanity itself, was marked by growth from the immature to the mature. Coe had abandoned theological concepts--such as election, justification, and sanctification--as guides to the meaning of religious development very early; by 1902 he was abandoning philosophical norms as well. What was coming to the fore in his thought was a psychological standard based on a process of natural growth.

His standard, however, was in conflict with the view, still strong within Methodism at the turn of the century, that religious maturity was marked by a sudden transformation completely discrete from any process of growth, however accelerated.[44] Before Coe's emerging norm of growth in religious life could be established, he had to find a way of dealing with the obtrusive factor of conversion in religious life.[45] Personalism as a philosophy of religion muted conversion because it stressed God working in and through persons in a way which never violated their individual integrity or the regularity of natural law. By the 1890's, however, Coe was moving away from philosophical speculation about religion and toward empirical studies of religion. He eagerly participated in the scholarly interest in the psychology of adolescent conversion which research emanating from Clark University sparked during that decade.

Bowne praised The Religion of a Mature Mind, which still bore the marks of a personalist philosophy of religion; he was less enthusiastic about Coe's 1899 empirical study, "The Dynamics of Personal Religion," which presaged Coe's commitment to a psychological study of religion.[46] We must now examine the context which gave that article its lasting significance for Coe's religious pedagogy.

The decade of the nineties was a fruitful one for psychologists investigating the phenomena of adolescence, and particularly so for those interested in the relationship between adolescence and conversion. G. Stanley Hall, the first American Ph.D. in psychology, was a strong supporter of research in adolescent development after he became president of Clark University.[47] Deeply romantic about the plasticity and potentiality of adolescents, Hall was influenced by German researchers who emphasized adolescence as a time of Sturm und Drang, a time of turmoil and stress during which the waves of feeling and thinking appropriate to childhood broke down and new levels of thinking and feeling were achieved. Hall's willingness to romanticize the potentiality for spiritual rebirth during these years was evident in his statement that the adolescent experienced "the second birth of love in the largest Christian sense."[48] Hall interpreted youth as a new elite capable of ushering in "the kingdom of the superman."[49] Coe never shared this excessive romanticization of the purity and intensity of adolescent religious feeling. He wrote more prosaically that excessive adolescent religiosity may be due to "a disturbed function, as of digestion, or a general state of nerve fatigue."[50] Far from confronting impressionable youth with the heady prospect of their high destiny for ushering in a new world, Coe prescribed for them objective interests, good nutrition, adequate sleep, and fresh air.[51]

Although little influenced by Hall himself Coe was deeply impressed by the research of several of his associated at Clark University: Arthur H. Daniels, James H. Leuba, and Edward Diller Starbuck.[52]

In 1893, Daniels published "A New Life: A Study of Regeneration,"[53] in which he reviewed the enormous amount of information on initiation and puberty rites amassed by nineteenth century anthropologists. Although he carefully detailed their exotic--and erotic--character, Daniels was not concerned with the rites themselves, but rather with the fact that every primitive society marked the transition from childhood to adulthood in a public, ceremonial way. Noting that the Christian churches either confirmed or converted their new members at or near the age of puberty, Daniels specifically placed the Christian practice of confirmation or conversion in the context of primitive "rites of passage." He urged the churches to be

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more aware of the social function they performed in thus marking the transition from childhood to maturity.

Three years later Leuba published an article arguing that all philosophies of religion must be superseded by a psychological study of religion.[54] "If religion has any reality," he wrote, "it must express itself in psychic and physiological phenomena."[55] He recommended research into particular subjective manifestations of religious life, such as a sense of sin, repentance, remorse, and conversion.

Starbuck meanwhile was engaged in just such an empirical investigation of conversion. He used the questionnaire method pioneered by Hall in his child study movement to elicit from his respondents a wide range of information on their religious life. He reported his findings in a paper read before the Harvard Religious Union in 1895.[56] Both Hall at Clark and William James at Harvard were impressed by Starbuck's methodology and his conclusions.[57]

By 1900 a large amount of research indicated a correlation between the phenomenon of conversion and adolescence.[58] Starbuck fixed the average age of conversion of 776 students at a Protestant seminary at 16.4 years. Another researcher found the average age of conversion of 526 British and American YMCA staff to be 16.5. In another study, Starbuck reported the average age of conversion of fifty-one men to be 15.7. Coe reported his finding that the average age of conversion among ninety-nine men was 15.4, only .3 below Starbuck's average. The modal age of conversion of a group of 272 Methodists was

16 years, only .3 above Starbuck's mean. Of a total of 1,784 cases reported to that date, the average age of conversion was 16.4 years. These studies fully satisfied Coe that "something like these results would hold for all large groups."[59]

In his Gifford lectures of 1900 and 1901, William James noted the close tie between religious feeling and the physiological changes of puberty which these statistics indicated. However, he argued, as did Starbuck and Coe, that religious feeling was no more discredited by its coincidence with physiological development than was philosophy or reflective thought which also matured in the individual as he passed through the Sturm und Drang of adolescence.[60] James' lectures are now the locus classicus for a survey of the full range of religious expression. He referred frequently in them to autobiographical material collected from the questionnaires circulated by Starbuck. Drawing upon Leuba and Daniel's work, James also cited Coe's 1899 study on "the dynamics of personal religion."[61]

Lecturing as a scientist before an academic audience, James took little risk in presenting empirical data on the religious life; but Coe, a professor in a college under the aegis of a denomination famed for its belief in the converting power of "the spirit," did take a professional risk when he participated in empirical studies of the religious life. Later, he may have made more of the risk he took than any existing evidence now warrants; but his devotion to empirical research did widen the breach between him and Bowne. Despite

Bowne's emphasis upon the practical, he was far from ready to support a method which counted cases in order to determine the nature of the religious life. Bowne believed that philosophy and religion must stay within the bounds of normative judgments; but in this study Coe, following Leuba's lead, brought the spiritual life to the bar of empirical investigation.[62] Coe justified his position arguing that no norm, however derived, could be as satisfactory for an understanding of religion as an investigation of the religious life of actual men and women. "It is the humanity that now is," he wrote

> . . . that gives us our problems concerning man's origin and development, and that necessarily controls and tests our hypotheses. . . . Similarly, knowledge of what religion now is must be the most illuminating factor in any satisfactory science of religion.[63]

However, Coe was not as open to the full range of religious experience as was William James. James began his lectures by noting that he would not dismiss anything in the religious experience of humanity which might help in defining the phenomena of religion. He warned his listeners in his first lecture that they would be subjected to a review of religious behavior that could justly be termed pathological. To the question, why not simply leave the pathological out?, he answered:

> First, I say irrepressible curiosity imperiously lead one on; and I say, secondly, that it always leads to a better understanding of a thing's significance to consider its exaggerations and perversions, its equivalents and substitutes and nearest relatives elsewhere. Not that we may thereby swamp the thing in the wholesale condemnation which we may pass on its inferior congeners, but rather that we may by contrast ascertain the more precisely in what its merits consist, by learning at the same time to what particular dangers of corruption it may also be exposed.[64]

Coe, too, acknowledged the range and diversity of religious phenomena: the ecstasy of the neo-Platonists, the enlightenment of Gautama Buddha, the visions of the saints, the absorption of the mystics into the divine, the religious epidemics of the Middle Ages, tarantism, St. Vitus Dance, and the outpouring of "the power" in Methodist services.[65] But he began his study of religious life in the confident expectation that the line between the normal and abnormal in religious phenomena could be clearly traced.

Coe compared himself to a scientist investigating any phenomena: he was looking for regularities or laws of the religious life.[66] The search for uniformities in religion did not raise the question of who or what is the real agent of religious impulses in the individual. Coe saw only "a strange inversion of faith" in those who denied the possibility of uniformity or law in the religious life since order, not chaos, was the characteristic of the Divine Mind which maintained all phenomena according to Coe. He thus entered on his phenomenological study of religion confident that he could discover the natural order which lay hidden beneath the surface heterogeneity of religious life. The purpose of religious life may be hidden from science, but Coe argued that the uniformities that might exist between certain antecedents and certain consequents in the religious life of individuals were well within the purview of science.[67]

Building on Starbuck's conclusion that further studies focusing upon temperament might reduce the variety of religious experience to some order, Coe focused his research on so complete an analysis of the religious experience of seventy-seven subjects that uniformities, if they existed, would be clearly shown. Although dealing with so few individuals, Coe declared that a more satisfactory set of cases would be hard to imagine. All those in his study were young, close in time yet to the chief religious experiences of adolescence; they retained the habit of introspective analysis so central in adolescence; and the large majority had been reared in the Methodist Church "which lays great stress on personal religious experiences."[68]

Coe used the questionnaire method of Starbuck, supplemented with two other methods which he hoped would reduce the subjective element which many critics believed Starbuck's exclusive reliance on self-administered questionnaires introduced into his work. Coe designed his questionnaire to elicit both facts about religious experience and training as well as preferences and attitudes which might reveal temperament. The questionnaires were followed up by interviews with each of the subjects. These interviews, in turn, were supplemented by interviews with close friends or family members so that what each respondent said about himself could be checked with what those close to him observed of his religious life and temperament. Finally, all but three of the subjects who had been taught to expect religious transformation were tested under hypnosis.

In his study, Coe defined conversion as a striking transformation or "a profound change which, though not necessarily instantaneous, seems to the subject of it to be distinctly different from a process of growth, however rapid."[69] He permitted each person to determine if his religious life had been marked by such a transformation.

Out of his sample of seventy-seven, seventeen persons expected and received a sudden religious transformation; twelve expected such a transformation, but did not receive one; and five responded that while they had experienced sudden religious growth they "were still unsatisfied or who being satisfied sought a still higher experience in vain."[70] The most minute scrutiny was given to this group of thirty-four subjects who possessed the common characteristic of seeking a religious transformation.

Coe followed a practical eclecticism in arriving at a scheme which would permit him to classify his subjects according to temperament. He accepted Wundt's use of the traditional categories of temperament which had come down from Galen: the choleric, the sanguine, the melancholic, and the phlegmatic. To this he added a refinement of French researchers which required identification of the predominant faculty, whether intellect, will, or sensibility. In the end, Coe was able to characterize each individual among the thirty-four who expected marked transformations according the the promptness and intensity of their faculties for intellect, sensibility, and will. Coe noted that the results fell together with an inevitableness that inspired confidence in his methodology.[71]

Twelve of the seventeen students who expected and received a marked religious transformation were classified as those in whom sensibility dominated; two of those in whom intellect dominated; and three as those in whom will dominated. Of the twelve who sought but did not experience a marked transformation, only one was classified as preeminent in will and two in sensibility but nine in intellect.[72]

Coe further classified his students according to whether or not they experienced striking dreams, hallucinations, or motor automatisms.[73] His results, he wrote, "are so unequivocable that interpretation is unnecessary."[74] Twenty-seven percent of the whole sample of seventy-seven students reported some mental or motor automatism; eight percent of those who failed to experience a marked religious transformation reported such automatisms; but fifty-four percent of those reporting marked religious trnasformations also reported automatisms. Coe could not forebear to interpret: "The conclusion is that the mechanism of striking religious transformations is the same as the mechanism of our automatic mental processes."[75]

In the final phase of his study, Coe subjected individuals in each of his three groups to hypnosis. Coe found no difference in readiness of response to hypnotic suggestion among those who had experienced religious transformations and those who had not. But he did detect a difference in the manner of responding. Coe identified as "passives" those who carried out under hypnosis suggestions without adding anything of their own. Coe hypothesized that those who did not respond directly

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to suggestions under hypnosis may in fact have been persons who spontaneously asserted a counter-suggestion. These, plus others who, while responding to suggestion, added something original of their own, he identified as "spontaneous." He gave as an example of the latter, the student who, told under hypnosis that his right arm was cataleptic, rigidly extended his left arm as well. Only fourteen of the seventeen students who sought and received religious transformation were available for hypnosis. Of these fourteen, thirteen fell into the passive category. Of the twelve who sought but failed to receive such a transformation, nine fell into the spontaneous category.[76]

Coe's findings made him confident that he was near to discovery of the uniformities which underlay the spiritual life. Once temperament and suggestibility are controlled, the variety of religious response takes on a predictable character. Now he believed that striking psychological manifestations which climax "in emotional revivals, camp meetings, and negro (sic) services . . . have a direct relation to certain states of an essentially hypnotic and hallucinatory kind."[77] Coe surveyed swiftly the heights and depths of the religious landscape--from the sacred frenzy of the Bacchantes to the converting presence of "the power" in Methodist services--and concluded that they were induced by hypnotic processes "now well understood."[78]

Coe incorporated this study as chapter three of his first book, The Spiritual Life, published in 1900. In his Preface, he noted that the book gave him the opportunity to work out "a few closely related groups of facts";[79] sometime later--

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indeed, it would prove to be sixteen years later--he hoped to develop a systematic psychology of religion. Drawing together all the psychological research done up to that time on religious transformation in adolescence, Coe emphasized the findings of Starbuck that not all persons who grew into a mature faith experienced such a transformation, nor did all those who experienced a transformation find it a lasting experience.[80]

These findings made him frankly critical of the Methodist Church's dependence upon revival methods for securing religious transformations. Coe argued that revivalism, since it did not attend to the natural laws which he believed governed religious development, but expended its interest on the extraordinary instead, was wasteful of means everywhere present for the nurture of the religious life in the individual. By its emphasis upon sudden transformations, the church surrendered the care of souls to a process over which it had no control and neglected a process of nurture which it could control.[81]

There is something very pro forma about Coe's acknowledgment that "how and then" moral and religious ends are really served by the phenomenon of conversion. His summary of the research on conversion contained more than a hint of regret that the religious life should be so dissipated in such transitory or subjective states of feeling and not channeled into moral action. Counseling himself as well as his readers, Coe wrote that although "the modern mind, of course, does not look upon these phenomena as special evidence of the immediate presence of God," neither should it regard them as necessarily worthless.

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But as though even that was too much of a concession, he added

> The ultimate test of religious values, however, is nothing physchological, nothing definite in terms of how it happens, but something ethical, definable only in terms of what is attained of loving trust toward God and brotherly goodness toward men.[82]

Writing from the perspective of a committed churchman, the impact of Coe's book was to suggest scientific laws for the normalization of the religious life; while James, who lectured as a psychologist, ended by pleading the social utility of even completely idiosyncratic religious behavior.

The last chapter of The Spiritual Life was the second of the seven essays Coe judged most significant for an understanding of his intellectual development. In this chapter, under the title, "A Study in Spirituality," Coe gave a wide-ranging interpretation to the significance of his research into temperament.[83] Before discussing that interpretation, it is important to note that the research on which it was based was Coe's last empirical investigation. Unlike Starbuck, who followed up his studies of conversion by investigating the formation of moral character, Coe never again engaged in research. Although he would always emphasize the empirical base of his religious psychology and pedagogy, his own experimentation ended with "A Study of the Dynamics of Personal Religion."

Coe began "A Study of Spirituality" with the assertion that the church had warped spiritual life into merely temperamental forms. He acknowledged that the four traditional temperaments were but a crude classification of the full range of personality types, but, even so, he listed them as suggestive. He

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described the sanguine personality as a blend of hopefulness and ardor, impulsiveness and impressionability. Persons of this type focus upon the present; they respond promptly to suggestions, but their commitments are changeable and frequently lacking in depth. The melancholy temperament is sentimental, revelling in feeling and undisciplined by thought. Saddened by introspection, the melancholy value the future above the present and judge everything from ideals that master the feelings. The choleric as a group are prompt, extroverted, and fully immersed in the present. They are practical in their thinking and intense in their commitments. The phlegmatic personality is slow and deliberate, someone in whom both feeling and action are muted.[84]

Coe argued that the church gave greater scope to the spirituality of the sanguine and melancholy temperaments than to the choleric or phlegmatic. His research indicated that the former were far more apt to be suggestive under hypnosis and, as a group, reported far higher incidents of conversion than the choleric group. Since the Methodist Church emphasized conversion as an entrance to Christian life, Coe argued that it limited Christian discipleship to a preferred temperamental type rather than making it attractive to all. Coe also reviewed the ideal of the saint throughout Christian history suggesting that this ideal was congenial to the melancholy personality, but lacked appeal to those in whom an active, practical will dominated. Examining the Methodist hymnbook, he concluded that the hymns overwhelmingly emphasized subjective states of feeling rather than stirring the worshipper to action. Popular piety, too, largely identified spirituality with such passive virtues as humility, meekness and forebearance rather than such active virtues as altruism, social concern, and intellectual rigor.

Coe recommended that this temperamental bias in the church be corrected by an emphasis upon "the universally human" in all religion. He rejected feeling as constituting the universal in religion, asserting that "love of God and love to fellow man--this is the universally attainable in religious experience."[85] The Greek verb "to love," he noted, does not designate a state of feeling, but primarily a state of will. To love God and the neighbor, he concluded, is to take on an attitude of mind "that can be voluntarily assumed by all persons, irrespective of temperamental or other peculiarities."[86] Coe declared that the foundation on which the church in the twentieth century should rest was "the spirit of the moral will and of the truth-loving intellect."[87] This standard must not be one that the church merely tolerates: "It must be preached, insisted upon, gloried in."[88]

This new standard of what a Christian is required a new interpretation of Jesus. Jesus has always been interpreted in Christian theology as "true man"--to use the phrase of the Athanasian Creed--and now Coe projected him as the normative man for the new Christianity. Coe in 1900 stood on the boundary line at the point where the historical lives of Jesus, produced so abundantly throughout the nineteenth century, were creating a new Christology. The meaning of Jesus was no longer to be found in the recondite doctrines of the Trinity or the Logos or the dual nature; but rather in Jesus' humanity, his social vision and, above all, his ethical sensitivity. Confident that the biblical scholarship of his day had bypassed dogma to discover the lineaments of "the Jesus of history," Coe declared that Jesus was not a sentimental or melancholy or introspective personality. "If we would but look," he wrote, "we should find an active and penetrating and objective intelligence shining through his teachings."[89]

Clearly, in this chapter, Coe identified himself as "a once-born man," to use a typology given academic recognition by James in his Gifford lectures.[90] James contrasted "the once born,"--a robust individual confident that he could meet religion's highest tests by an act of his moral will--and "the twice born"--a chastened individual humbled by the realization that only the surrender of his will brought spiritual peace. Only a "once born" personality can declare that Jesus' commandment of love is the universally attainable element in religion. It is an assertion standing in marked contrast to St. Paul's confession that knowledge of the full demand of the law brought him to a conviction of sin;[91] or to Luther's teaching that the law was "the schoolmaster" leading the believer to faith in Christ as the only perfect fulfillment of the law.[92] Coe, however, rejected traditional biblical or theological norms in his study. He was asserting a new norm for the spiritual life of the man in whom the preeminent faculty was the intellect and the will; or, as he phrased it in the title of his next book, he was defining "the religion of a mature mind."

"A Study of Spirituality" illustrated the elisions of thought which will become so dominant in Coe's later writing; for here, without warning to the reader, statements about religion become statements about Christianity and statements about Christianity become statement of value. The Kantian and Ritschlian reformulations of the meaning of religious certainty have become in this chapter the full content of the Christian religion. The philosophy of Kant has collapsed into the assertion that we know the meaning of religion only in our ethical acts; the liberal theology of Ritschl has become the new dogma that Christian faith is ethical love. In this chapter we glimpse Coe not as the student or scholar we have followed up to this point, but as a popularizer, someone who stood on the boundary where "the new theology" was becoming the conventional Christian wisdom.

The wide range of Coe's interests and his refusal to be bound within the structure of one disciple led him, perhaps inevitably, to the role of popularizer. It is a role he did not fully assume until much later, but it is foreshadowed in the crisscrossing of his varied interests in this chapter. Like the choleric man he was, practical considerations moved him beyond analysis to a wide-ranging synthesis. In "A Study of Spirituality" Coe, the personalist philosopher of religion merged with Coe, the Methodist churchman; here, Coe, the

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empirical psychologist became Coe, the expounder of modern Christianity. The resultant blend was Coe, the religious educator.

In February, 1903, when he attended the national conference on religious education, Coe was associated in the conference program with Starbuck and John Dewey. Writing a quarter of a century later, Starbuck recalled that the participants in the conference were "a cheerful army of high minded dreamers. We imagined that a 'science' of religion was almost in sight--certainly just around the next turning of the road."[93] Whatever Coe's emotions may have been at the time, his subsequent career clearly indicates that the conference was a watershed in his life.

That same month and year, he wrote in a preface to the second edition of The Religion of a Mature Mind that the book was not intended to describe a mature religion, but, rather, "the attitude of a mature mind to religion." Certainly, he could with justice refer to his own maturity; he was now forty-one years old and his thought was ripened by education and experience. In his 1904 essay, "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education,"[94] he summed up the intellectual currents that created the Religious Education Association: evolutionary science, philosophical idealism, the philosophy of religion, and the theological reformulation within Christianity itself. These same currents were also combining within his own thought to create a new pattern for his career, a pattern that would dominate the second forty years of his life. The erstwhile minister, now philosopher and psychologist, would become in time so identified with the Association as to earn the title, "the father of the religious education movement."[95] The title is apt, not because he initiated the conference--that honor belonged to William Rainey Haper--but because the seminal ideas that created the movement were a part of his own being.

The same ideas that bore the religious education movement in their current carried Coe to the point where he finally identified Christianity and education. He conceived Christianity without dogma as an educative process, although still a sacred process; for it was the process of making persons. In this process Christ was no longer the redeemer; he became "the supreme Educator."[96] He called persons to creative participation with God in the educative process: "God's way of making men is through men."[97]

These sentences from his third book, Education in Religion and Morals, published in 1904, are embedded in a context which is still decidedly personalistic and pietistic. The thoroughness with which he had already recast the Christian faith into an educational perspective, however, is shown in this passage:

> Even when we advance to the notions of incarnation and atonement, we are not outside the circle of educational ideas. For incarnation is the supreme instance of the sharing of life through which an incomplete life attains unfoldment or education. As to atonement, whatever tragedy of the divine heart is suggested by this term the working out of the fact in the world, the historical at-one-ment of man and God, is accomplished by the essentially

> educational method of revelation through personality in the sharing of life. The process of redemption is at root all one with the process of education.[98]

Education in Religion and Morals is significant chiefly because it points toward his definition of religion in functional terms. By 1908 his belief that religion has no unique content but is the process by which values are clarified and conserved will be made explicit in a scholarly article unclouded by the pervasive piety of Education in Religion and Morals.

The examination of three articles published in 1908 will round out this study of Coe's intellectual development during his Northwestern years. "What is Pragmatism?" indicated his responsiveness to pragmatism as interpreted by James and Schiller; "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation" defined the point beyond which he could not travel with James; and "Religious Value" marked his acceptance of Høffding's definition of religion as "the conservation of value."

"What is Pragmatism?"[99] appeared in response to James' book on pragmatism published in 1907.[100] Although modern pragmatism dates from the publication in 1878 of Charles S. Peirce's article, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," it was not until James used Peirce's principle in a lecture delivered in 1898 that the word "pragmatism" gained widespread critical attention in philosophic journals.[101] James noted that pragmatism provided a convenient category for a number of tendencies that previously lacked a collective name. Arthur O. Lovejoy[102] analyzed these tendencies within pragmatism with great conceptual clarity in

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his 1908 article on "the thirteen pragmatisms"; James, however, in his far less technical discussion laid stress only upon the distinction between pragmatism as a method and pragmatism as a theory of truth.

First, James emphasized that there was absolutely nothing new in the pragmatic method. Socrates himself had been skillful in using it; Aristotle used it methodically; and, continued James, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, "made momentous contributions to truth by its means."[103] Most simply pragmatism required that the thinker turn his attention from "first things, principles, 'categories,' supposed necessities"[104] and look instead at consequences. James did not include Jesus in his survey of the ancients who used the pragmatic method--although Coe would freely do so later--but in pragmatism's emphasis that any true difference in ideas makes a difference in practice there is an echo of Jesus' maxim that those who have true ideas will be known by their fruits (Matthew 7:16).

James quoted the illustration of the Italian philosopher, Papini, to underscore the neutrality of the pragmatic method. Papini described pragmatism as lying in the midst of philosophic theories like a corridor in a hotel. Continuing the simile, James wrote that in the innumerable chambers opening out from the corridor

> . . . you may find a man writing an atheistic volume; in the next some one on his knees praying for faith and strength; in a third a chemist investigating a body's properties. In a fourth a system of idealistic metaphysics is being excogitated; in a fifth the impossibility of metaphysics is being shown. But they all own the corridor, and all must pass through it if

> they want a practicable way of getting into or out of respective rooms.[105]

The aptness of Papini's simile is shown in the fact that John Dewey used the corridor of pragmatism to exclude all idealist cognition from his system while F. C. S. Schiller at Oxford explored the same commodious corridor in order to preserve a personal idealism. Throughout his essay James linked Dewey and Schiller together as the two philosophers who contributed the most to the genuinely novel emphasis in modern pragmatism, i.e., its theory of truth.

Only recently, James wrote, did pragmatism generalize itself and become conscious of its universal mission by developing a theory of truth. Pragmatism "pretended to a conquering destiny"[106] when it linked itself to the new logic then dominating in the sciences. In the eighteenth century when scientists expressed in laws the order and regularity of a seemingly mechanical universe, many theorists deciphered in them the eternal thoughts of the Almighty. They believed, James wrote, that the Almighty

> . . . made Kepler's laws for the planets to follow . . . he established the classes, orders, families and genera of plants and animals and fixed the distance between them. He thought the archetypes of all things.[107]

But in the nineteenth century scientists were moving toward the recognition that their laws were only approximations of reality, not faithful copies. Law in science was giving way to hypothesis as scientists stressed the usefulness of a generalization in summarizing old facts and pointing to new ones. Such generalizations were "a conceptual shorthand," or "a man-made language,"

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tolerating much variety and imprecision.[108] Schiller and Dewey both responded to this new wave of scientific logic teaching that truth in our ideas and beliefs means the same thing that truth means in science. The pragmatic conception of truth, summarized James, is nothing but this--

> . . . that ideas (which themselves are but part of our experience) become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience. . . . Any idea upon which we can ride, so to speak; any idea that will carry us prosperously from one part of our experience to any other part, linking things satisfactorily, working securely, simplifying, saving labor, is true for just so much, true in so far forth, true instrumentally.[109]

Coe's article, "What is Pragmatism?" is noteworthy because it revealed his acceptance of pragmatism as emerging from within his still inchoate functional psychology, from his predominately Ritschlian theology of value, and from Schiller's personal idealism. Given his identification of these elements as the principle components in pragmatism, it is easy to understand why he always believed he came to pragmatism independently of Dewey, and even of James.

In his article Coe reviewed the historical, theological, and psychological perspectives which led him to pragmatism. Historically the significance of pragmatism was that it represented a modification of empiricism while remaining resolutely opposed to rationalism. He interpreted pragmatism as a contemporary expansion of the Kantian doctrine of the primacy of the practical reason as against the theoretical, arguing that pragmatism was a development within philosophy similar to Ritschlianism within theology. Perhaps his statement that pragmatism in

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philosophy corresponds to Ritschlianism in Protestant theology is the most significant in this short article. Coe noted that even as Ritschl interpreted all theological statements as value statements so pragmatism interpreted all statements of fact as finally statements about meaning. Just as Ritschl did away with religious knowledge transforming religion into value experienced in human life so pragmatism sought to excise knowledge from philosophy in order to create instrumental value. Coe interpreted this as an example of philosophy following a mode created by theology. The mantle of Kant, lost with the ascendancy of the neo-Hegelians, had finally found its true resting place, he concluded, on the shoulders of the pragmatists.

Clearly emerging in this article is the functional psychology which will dominate by 1916 his major scholarly work, The Psychology of Religion. Coe wrote that the most illuminating perspective within which to view pragmatism was the psychological. Coe argued that the mind and its processes could not be placed outside of the "pull and haul of the evolutionary struggle." "Today," he wrote,

> . . . the notion of mental efficiency as a factor in the life struggle is becoming dominant. We are endeavoring . . . to understand ideational and other mental processes from the standpoint of what they do for the life of which they are a phase. . . .
>
> Ideas . . . are not only not little entities having a peculiar existence of their own; they are not even mental acts performed in some compartment of our being separate from the labor and sweat of the common day; they are themselves a part of the practical life-process, and one of the duties of psychology in regard to them is to show what function they perform.[110]

All mental phenomena--ideation, emotion, attention, consciousness itself--are responses to some need of the organism. The emphasis must be placed upon the human or social need that called them forth and their effectiveness in meeting that need. Biology asked of any organ not only its form, size, intention, but its origin and the ongoing function that it performed in the life of the individual; contemporary psychology was beginning to ask the same questions. "The whole meaning and importance of our thought-life," he wrote,

> . . . and the inmost nature of all our ideas and reasonings, are to be looked for in what our thoughts accomplish in the rough-and-tumble struggle to live and to live well.[111]

This functional approach to mental life may at first look innocent, but it is revolutionary; for, he continued,

> If it is correct, the objects (sic) of thought have no existence for us apart from our needs in the way of adjustment to the conditions of life. Here is where we pass over from the functional psychology to the pragmatic theory of knowledge and metaphysics. For now the whole notion of knowledge and the whole notion of reality require re-definition in terms of possible adjustive reactions and the satisfactions and dissatisfactions that they bring.[112]

Referring to the concept of absolute mind in idealism, Coe emphasized that such a concept could make no difference in the world of experience. We never get the point of view of such a mind, Coe wrote, since "our knowledge remains always our very own, always infused with human purposes and appreciations. The absolute, in which good and bad alike swallowed up, yeilds no guidance for our struggles."[113] It was on this basis that Ritschl declared the absolute of metaphysics a matter of indifference to religion. "The most fruitful theological tendency," continued Coe, is

> . . . the Ritschlian, with its insistence that we do not, as a matter of fact, derive religion from any idea or knowledge of God, but rather from our own need which reaches out after a supply.[114]

Coe argued that the general direction of pragmatism was in the direction of Kant's celebrated saying, "I must remove knowledge to make room for faith." No object unless it enters into our experiences for good or ill "can properly be said to exist."[115] Pragmatism thus "makes some form of value judgment the final test of every existential judgment."[116] Hence, Coe concluded, the "true historical affinity of pragmatism despite appearances is toward idealism."[117] While pragmatism was antipathetic toward rationalistic or absolute idealism it was compatible with what Coe in this article called "faith idealism," a combination of Schiller's humanism and Ritschl's theology.

Coe's "faith-idealism" while it recognized the place of the religious in human life was not as hospitable to religious claims to knowledge as was James' pragmatism. James' openness toward the full range of religious experience and his endorsement of research into all sorts of psychic phenomena brought him into disrepute with what he called his "clerico-academic-scientific" colleagues.[118] Coe, certainly not a typical clerical type, but perhaps fitting the description of an academic-scientific type, resolutely opposed what he called James' attempt "to incorporate psychological supernaturalism within modern science itself."[119]

The philsophical difference between the two men may well have been a reflection of their different religious experiences. While both James and Coe resolved a period of personal turmoil by an act of will, the intensity of their struggle was markedly different. Although James found a measure of stability and peace in his life at the decisive point when he affirmed the freedom of the will, he had to fight the symptoms of neurosis all his life.[120] To use the typology which he defined in his Gifford lectures, he was and acknowledged himself to be "a sick soul" while the apposite category for Coe was "the healthy minded."[121] James always lived close to the abyss of personal disintegration and existential meaninglessness, but Coe, according to the evidence available to us now, was always confident and optimistic with a robust ability to accept life on its own terms. His writings reveal him as a man without guilt or dread of any kind. Coe could only deal with the theological dread of a Luther as he did the anxiety of adolescence: they both represented an over-excited reaction to physiological disturbance. The idea of an evil principle in man so radical that it affected the will itself was completely alien to Coe who never referred to sin without explaining it away.[122] While Coe believed that humanity needed to be delivered from many forms of wrongdoing, he believed that God had provided the instrument of deliverance in the human intellect. This aspect of his thought will be explored more fully in later chapters; it is introduced at this point to heighten the psychological contrast between Coe and James and thus throw some light on the ability of Coe to analyze religion with an intellectual dispassion so in contrast to James' existential ardor. James, the sick soul, wrote to heal himself and others; he had experienced the absolute dread of existence, the Angst of Luther, and knew that coming back from such an experience was a second birth. But Coe is the once born man for whom growth and continuity are the paths to religious maturity.

The two men were alike, however, in that both found a resolution of their personal turmoil by an act of will. James found the courage to fight his neuroticism by his affirmation of the freedom of the will. Long before James' expression of the meaning of "the will to believe," Coe as a young man internalized the formula for himself.[123] He resolved the emotional and spiritual turmoil of his youth by voluntarily identifying himself with the Christian tradition. It is not too much to say that he spent his intellectual lifetime exploring the meaning of that youthful act of will. Both his research and his writing reflect his preoccupation with the role of will in religion. His study on the dynamics of personal religion isolated persons preeminent in will as ones rarely receiving a decisive religious experience, a conclusion that must have given him some sense of personal satisfaction. In "A Study of Spirituality," he argued that the church gave insufficient attention to the spiritual needs of such persons, but he found in pragmatism a dynamic, action oriented philosophy compatible with the religious and intellectual needs of all persons. The extent to which his thought may have been shaped by his lack of a religious transformation is a matter of interpretation, but he openly acknowledged that his devotion to a single epistemological principle growing out of his commitment to science had a decisive bearing upon his pragmatism.

On two occasions he chided James for lending the authority of his great name in psychology to the claim that mystical revelation was a source of knowledge, or, what James called "a definite perception of fact."[124] Although James based his belief on empirical evidence, his conclusion, wrote Coe, was as out of place as would be the conclusion of a physicist that matter has noumenal being. Such claims must be analyzed by the canons of philosophy, not empirical science. Coe's lucid thinking and clear writing in "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation" show him at his analytical best.

Coe identified two arguments on which the new and supposedly scientific claim of mysticism rested. The first he called the appeal to experts; the second, "the consensus populi" that the things of the spirit have real being. The expert testimony was that of the mystics themselves; but their testimony was a compound of certain elements which were universally affirmed by them and other elements peculiar to individual mystics or groups of mystics. Universally mystics described their experience as having the marks of an immediate and certain intuition into the meaning of all things coincident with the sensation of separation from the body, expanded consciousness,

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and transcendence over the contradictions and mysteries of life.

Other components of the mystical experience varied from culture to culture and according to the religious creed of the mystic leading one mystic to claim a union with Jesus, another with impersonal Being, still another with Nature. Coe designated these the sectarian elements in mystical experience asserting that each mystic brought back from his experience confirmation of his own creed. These elements could be accounted for by auto-suggestion: the mystic simply interpreted his experience in familiar thought patterns. But what of the universal elements? Did mysticism possess a common content that constituted valid perception?

Coe denied James' claim that mysticism was a source of illumination and that the mystical sensation was of an epistemological quality. James used the illustration of a matrimonial alliance to suggest the close tie between the universal and the sectarian elements in mystical experience. Coe questioned, however, whether there existed between the two elements such a difference in their origin and nature as to make marriage an applicable symbol. He argued that the universal elements are continuous with and not discrete from the sectarian and that both can be accounted for "by particular conditions without reference to ontology."[125]

First, he argued that the universal elements may have been secured because evidence of mystical experience was drawn from a group already biased in a particular direction. He put

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the case that if all who witnessed an earthquake were asked their opinion of free trade no skewing of range of responses would result; if, however, all those who read Kant's Critique of the Pure Reason were asked the same question, the range of responses would show an undue prominence of theoretical interests. Likewise, he continued,

> . . . when we heap up the testimonies of mystics, we similarly gather together a class of mental tendencies that we are not looking for, and specifically tendencies that affect the thing we are looking for.[126]

Frequently in his Gifford lectures James used testimonies about mystical experiences written by respondents to Starbuck's questionnaire. Coe argued that persons who responded readily to requests for information about their religious life were as a group persons whose religious life was marked by some decisive event. Their testimony tended to emphasize the break between their experience and the more ordinary religious life of mankind.

This led him to his second point that mystics as a group are highly suggestible, a generalization he believed he had verified in his own research. Mystics quickly regard as actual experience "that which is only interpretation of experience."[127] In this way anything can be asserted as a "direct perception of fact": the atonement, a personal devil, the actual presence of the Trinity, etc. Just as culture is the source out of which springs the dogma so religious culture is the source of the supposed revelation. "There is," he stated, "entire countinuity; we have dogma asserting itself at one end of the scale as belief, at the other end as intuition."[128] Only the methods employed to secure information about mystical experience prevent the continuity from becoming obvious.

Thirdly, Coe noted that there is an almost universal human aspiration after an experience which will systematize and unify "our scattered and discordant lives."[129] Coe balanced the claim that mystics have achieved this goal with the observation that many persons under hypnosis or in other trance like states--similar to those occurring just before or when just emerging from anesthesia--also experience a unity and completeness previously lacking in their lives. He described his own experience under self-induced hypnosis to prove his point. Under hypnosis, he experienced a sense of loss of personality; an impression of the self alienated from the body; and a complete identification with the object of his thought (the bright object on which he had fixed his gaze); and a pleasurable feeling akin to the ecstatic. "If the strange experiences of the hour had been met with naive wonder," he wrote, "instead of scientific coldness, pleasurable emotion of any degree of intensity might have developed."[130] Coe was confident that he could assert that the typical mystical process has the formal characteristics of self-hypnosis: "this is the mechanism whatever the content."[131]

Fourthly, Coe noted that the experience of persons who pass from muscular tension or rigidity to relaxation also have accompanying states of pleasure and self-unification similar to those reported by mystics. It does not discredit mysticism to assert that it has its basis in physiology; but it does discredit mysticism, according to Coe, to interpret it as an experience of "immediate intuition." "The mystic," he continued,

> . . . acquires his religious convictions precisely as his nonmystical neighbor does, namely through tradition and instruction, auto-suggestion grown habitual and reflective analysis. The mystic brings his theological beliefs to the mystical experience; he does not derive them from it.[132]

Lastly, Coe analyzed the argument that throughout history the masses generally have attributed their religious certitude to a non-cognitive intuition similar to the mystics. In popular religion it is feeling which becomes the source of "ontological messages which are of final validity."[133] Coe accepted the argument that the unconscious, automatic, affective levels of our selfhood can often guide us--and guide us more creatively--than can our conscious, voluntary, and cognitive levels of selfhood. But he rejected Starbuck's attempt to build a mystical theory on this basis. Starbuck's studies led him to the conclusion that religion was a matter of the affective life solely. While he believed religion to be directly opposed to the cognitive process, he asserted that it possessed objective content. Coe agreed that religious belief springs out of feelings, impulses, and practical attitudes, but he argued that the fact that belief has this background and incentive "does not yet justify the assertion that religious feeling contains in itself final and ontological conviction."[134] Coe was impatient with Starbuck's claim that

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there are no precise messages in religious feeling since "only feeling can appreciate the deliverances of feeling."[135] Coe characterized this argument as irrational since it amounted to the assertion that mysticism was not subject to the court of reason.

Coe concluded that both the sectarian and universal components of mystical experience can be accounted for without postulating ontological or epistemological validity for the experience. The superior certainty and authority which the mystic claims for his experience are illusionary: they arise from a process of auto-suggestion which gives the appearance of reality to ideas.

However Coe recognized that this account of the origin of mystical experience in the individual did not account for the phenomenon generally. Any one person may be under the power of auto-suggestion, but "the religious belief of humanity, taken in its grand totality, cannot be a product of external suggestion, as the belief of a single individual may be."[136] Rejecting the testimony of mystics that spiritual certainty was experienced as an infusion from a source outside of themselves, Coe hypothesized that religious certainty was in the race, as in the individual, self-produced. "All real religion," he wrote, "consists ultimately in some mystical practice, namely, the making real to ourselves of that which we do not perceive."[137] He recommended that future studies focus upon the function of the will in religion "and specifically in relation to religion certainty."[138] He ended his essay with almost the same words as those with which he ended his essay on pragmatism: analysis of the true meaning of mysticism leads us toward a faith-idealism or faith-philosophy. Yet, in a passage which more than any other he wrote could well be the basis for the assertion that he was a mystic, he concluded,

> . . . when such a faith-philosophy has done its utmost, there will remain the question, whether our will, after all, is merely ours; whether, indeed, communion with God may not genuinely occur in our religious will-acts, one of which is the autosuggestion of religious belief.[139]

The last of Coe's 1908 essays was originally read as a paper before the Western Philosophical Association on New Year's Day. Chronologically it was the first of the three, but logically it may be discussed last because it reveals the radical dimension of his analysis of religion. The impact of the essay on pragmatism was to affirm that ideas are validated only in the process by which an individual adjusts himself to his environment or the environment to himself. There can be no break between the organism and mind: no break between ideation and the struggle to live. In "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," he consistently maintained a similar point. Religious knowledge, like knowledge generally, is the result of reflection upon experience and hence there is complete continuity between coming to know in religion and coming to know in any other area of life. Lastly, in "Religious Value," Coe denied that there was any unique religious value asserting that values are continuous from the highest to the lowest. There is no value which cannot be religious and there is not one which

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is uniquely religious, i.e., unmixed with social or ethical meaning.

He began his article with a quotation from the "Zend-Avesta" in which Zarathustra asks: "O Maker of the natural world, thou Holy One! which is the first place where the earth feels most happy?"[140] And Ahura Maxda replies, "The spot on which the faithful steps when he offers sacrifice to the Lord of wide pastures."[141] To the question which is the second and on to which is the fifth place where on earth feels most happy, the answers are:

2. where one of the faithful erects a house with a priest within, with cattle, a wife, children and good herds within and where all blessings of life thrive;
3. where most corn, grass, fruit, cultivated;
4. where most increase of flocks;
5. where most increase of dung.[142]

Coe interpreted this passage as an illustration of the fact that values are relative to the state of culture of a society and that every society organizes its values into an hierarchy. The "Zend-Avesta" anecdote is a paradigmatic expression of the movement from economic to familial and social to religious value. The concrete expression of the order, integration, and idealization of values in every culture has been God or "some functional equivalent."

Religious values have a double character: they are both immanent and transcendent. Religious value is immanent in and partially identified with all values, however temporal, material, or sensual. But religious values also transcend all other values as their ideal unity and consumation; often such values are defined as eternal, religious, or spiritual goods exclusively. When these two aspects of value are not held together two mutually exclusive views of religion may result. The practical consequences of the interpretation of religious values as transcendent and otherworldly is a thirst for spiritual revelation; a willingness to submit to an authoritarian church; the development of "priest-crafts, ceremonialism and aescetism";[143] and the dominance of the idea of mortality. This view virtually identifies religion with metaphysics. The practical consequences of belief in the immanence of religious value in all other goods are that religion becomes identical with ethical or intellectual values; religion is ignored or included only "by subreption," i.e., under the heading of worship of beauty or humanity. Both ideas have to be held together in tension if the full benefit of practical consequences are to be released from religious value. Any kind of value, wrote Coe,

> . . . may be a religious value but only on condition of a certain inner self transcendence whereby the particular value demands complete organization of itself with other values and ideally complete realization of the unitary whole.[144]

He observed that Plato long ago recognized this when he described justice as the right organization of virtues and piety as justice in our relation to deity.

Coe's personalism was evident at two points in his argument. Firstly, in his statement that the inner organization and self-criticism of values was possible only when an ideal personality was assumed to which we ascribed authority over our actual personalities. Secondly, at the point where he adopted Høffding's definition of religion[145] as the conservation of values, Coe made the reservation that only the conservation of values which maintain personality can be seen as really religious. Moving away from the ontological reality of selfhood, Coe still defined the personal as the most sacred of all values.

By the end of 1908 the perimeters of Coe's thought were set. Still identifying himself with idealism, he was moving decisively away from Bowne's metaphysics; still a personalist, he was moving toward a social psychological norm for individuality. Influenced by Schiller and James, he rejected the epistemological subjectivism of the one and the ontological pluralism of the other. It may well be that his original theological monism combined with his rigorous epistemology to motivate him toward a more objective standard for pragmatic truth than either Schiller or James provided.

One thing is clear, however. In the development of his thought he was completely faithful to the intellectual heritage of his student days. The liberal Protestant principles of continuity, dynamism, and autonomy were reflected in all his work, but he was weaving them into a design unique to himself. Out of them he was creating a new norm for the maturely religious. Maturity in religion required acceptance of the concept of continuity throughout the life of the individual. He resisted the emphasis of Hall that adolescence was a break with the child life that came before; he broke with his church's emphasis on the discontinuity between the converted and the unconverted life asserting that conversion was a phenomenon more closely linked to temperament than to piety; he emphasized the norm of the choleric man of will who created his own assurance out of his own will-acts. He limited the religious to the ethical and social raised to their highest power and pointing toward their own transcendence. But never did he doubt that knowledge in religion is continuous with knowledge gained through reflection upon experience. The maturely religious mind was fully attuned to a scientific epistemology rigorous enough to rule out all supernaturalist interpretations of religious phenomena. Having rejected James' pluralism, by 1908 he was headed toward a monistic interpretation of reality which would progressively reject the supernatural and the mystical in religion and enthrone in their place the intelligent will of "modern manhood."

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

1. George A. Coe, Sadie Knowland Coe, p. 43. After reading the love letters of Elizabeth and Robert Browning, the Coes decided to burn the letters they wrote to each other during this two-year separation. Crying over the Brownings, they could not bear that eyes other than their own might one day be privy to their own devotion, p. 45.

2. James Aulten James, History of Northwestern: 1850-1939, 4 vols. (typed manuscript prepared in the 1950's and now available in Northwestern's archival collection), noted in vol. 2, pp. 18-19 that in 1892 there were two religious organizations on campus. Dwight L. Moody visited the campus that year and the faculty took regular turns giving Sunday school lectures. In 1896 a "new" daily chapel was inaugurated with Friday's service often given to "pep" sessions connected with inter-collegiate competition. Wilde, Northwestern University: A History, 1855-1905, recorded Coe's contribution to the athletic program at Northwestern, II, p. 252.

3. James, History of Northwestern, II, p. 3. James described the years from 1890 to 1900 as the years during which Northwestern moved "from university in name to university in fact."

4. Rogers resigned from Northwestern in 1900 under circumstances which led Thomas Elmer Will to include his name among a list of academic freedom cases occurring in the decade 1890-1900, see "A Menace to Freedom: The College Trust," Arena XXVI (September 1901): 254-256. Will's charges were picked up by Howard K. Beale in A History of Freedom of Teaching in American Schools (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1941), pp. 227-230; but, although there was a press attack on Rogers for his vocal opposition to American policy during the Spanish-American War, there is little further evidence on which to base Will's claim according to Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger in The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), pp. 420-423. The archives of Northwestern University contain correspondence between Marion Knoblauch on the staff of the Illinois Writers' Project of the Works Project Administration and editor of a proposed history of civil liberty in Illinois and Coe which sheds some light on Rogers' resignation. On May 15, 1940, she wrote Coe asking if he knew "whether Henry Wade Rogers withdrew because of a disagreement with the trustees on matters of policy and

efficiency, or whether he was rather forced out because of his economic or political views." On June 1, 1940, Coe replied: "Your letter gives me the first intimation that anyone ever supposed that Henry Wade Rogers got crisscross of the trustees because of his economic or political views. His disagreement with the trustees--and with a large part of the Evanston faculty--concerned exclusively his internal policies. I can speak with confidence on this point because I was heartily opposed to his arbitrary methods, and because he held me responsible in some measure for his downfall."

5. Coe, What Ails Our Youth?, pp. 58-59.

6. Harold Bolce, "Blasting at the Rock of Ages," in Portraits of the American University: 1890-1910, compiled by James C. Stone and Donald P. DeNevi (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, Inc., 1971), pp. 269-270.

7. James, History of Northwestern, II, pp. 18-19.

8. Coe noted this in his Preface to The Religion of a Mature Mind.

9. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 101.

10. J. Z. Jacobson, Scott of Northwestern: The Life Story of a Pioneer in Psychology and Education (Chicago: Louis Mariane Pub., 1951), p. 48. Scott said of Coe that the kind of fact that most interested him was one which gave the most control over some event, pp. 35-36. In his dedication to The Psychology of Public Speaking (1906) Scott referred to Coe as the scientist "who inspired in him a love for psychology." Robert L. Church, in "Educational Psychology and Social Reform in the Progressive Era," History of Education Quarterly XI (Winter 1971): 390-405, noted that Wundt was willing to wait one hundred years to see any application of the knowledge coming from his laboratory, p. 397.

11. Jacobson, Scott of Northwestern, p. 33.

12. Ibid., p. 71.

13. He reviewed Allen Grant's The Evolution of the Idea of God, in the Philosophical Review VII (March 1898): 210-213; Franz Ethardt, Die Wechselwirkung zwischen Leib und Seele in the Philosophical Review VII (May 1898): 323-325; and A. H. Lloyd, Citizenship and Salvation: Or Greek and Jew in the Philosophical Review VII (November 1898): 664-665.

14. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," identifiied as significant for his intellectual development: (1) "A Study in the Dynamics of Personal Religion," Psychological Review (September 1899): 484-505, reprinted as Chapter 3 in The Spiritual Life; (2) "Study of Spirituality," Chapter 5 in The Spiritual Life;

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(3) "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," Hibbert Journal (January 1908): 359-372, reprinted in Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 130-136; (4) "Religious Value" in Journal of Psychology (1908): 253-256; (5) "The Mystical as a Psychological Concept," Journal of Psychology and Scientific Method (April 15, 1909): 197-202. Since the argument in articles four and five are similar, I have discussed only four in this chapter and added to the list, "What is Pragmatism," Methodist Quarterly Review LVII (April 1908): 211-219. The remaining two articles are (6) "On Having Friends," Journal of Philosophy (1915): 155-161, reprinted in Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 142-145; and (7) "A Realistic View of Death," in Douglas Clyde Macintosh, ed., Religious Realism (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931).

15. Hall, "The Moral and Religious Training of Children and Adolescents," in Pedagogical Seminary I (1891): 196-210. John Janeway Conger, Adolescence and Youth: Psychological Development in a Changing World (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 7-8, noted that Hall and his students did much to introduce scientific techniques into the study of adolescence and to establish it as a substantive field of study in its own right.

16. "If," John Dewey wrote, "we are willing to conceive education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow men, philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education," Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: Macmillan Co., 1916), p. 328, italicized in the original.

17. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 98, wrote that his rejection of theological orthodoxy as based on a fallacious view of authority was only the beginning of his heterodoxy. In time he came to question economic, social, and political orthodoxies of all kinds, recognizing that authority expelled through the door of the mind often came back through the window. After graduation from Boston University, he no longer imposed upon himself "the duty of keeping abreast of theological thought."

18. Albert C. Knudson, The Philosophy of Personalism: A Study in the Metaphysics of Religion (New York: Abingdon Press, 1927), p. 8, in italics in the original. Knudson was dean of Boston University School of Theology when he wrote. He made no mention of Coe, perhaps an indication of Coe's disfavor within the Boston University circle following his break with Bowne. But Schneider, A History of American Philosophy, identified Knudson, Edgar S. Brightman, R. T. Flewelling, and Coe as "champions" of Bowne's personal idealism, p. 400.

19. Charles Renouvier, *Le Personnalisme* (1903).

20. Borden Parker Bowne, *Personalism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1908). Portions of *Personalism* were delivered as the Harris lectures at Northwestern. Schneider, *A History of American Philosophy*, summed up Bowne's contribution noting that when he came under the influence of Lotze he "realized at once the important bearings of his theory of the empirical self for the criticism of academic orthodoxy on the one hand and of British empiricism on the other," pp. 402-403.

21. Knudson, *The Philosophy of Personalism*, identified the theistic personalism of J. M. E. McTaggart, p. 22; the pantheistic personalism of William Stein, p. 25, the relativistic personalism of Charles Renouvier, p. 37; and the absolute idealism of Edward Carid and Josiah Royce, p. 30.

22. *Ibid*., p. 39.

23. References in *The Letters of William James*, I, p. 186 and II, p. 44 are quoted by Knudson, *The Philosophy of Personalism*, p. 49. Renouvier's opposition to the absolute led George Seailles in *La Philosophie de Charles Renouvier*, p. 400, to call him "the anarchistic theologian of the Republic of God," quoted by Knudson, p. 40.

24. George H. Howsion, *Limits of Evolution* (1901), summarized by Knudson, p. 54.

25. *Ibid*., p. 62.

26. *Ibid*., p. 62; quoted from A. A. Pringle-Patterson, *Man's Place in the Cosmos* (1897), p. vi.

27. Schneider, *A History of American Philosophy*, p. 401.

28. Borden Parker Bowne explored this theme in *Philosophy of Theism* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1887), revised and amended and republished as *Theism* (New York: American Book Co., 1902); quoted in Schneider, *A History of American Philosophy*, p. 401.

29. Knudson, *The Philosophy of Personalism*, pp. 178-179. Knudson listed six articles in the metaphysical creed of personalism: (1) reality is concrete and individual leaning towards pluralism and natural realism; (2) the world and world-ground is a unity leaning toward monism and absolutism; (3) reality is active and substance is interpreted primarily in terms of causality; (4) causality must be interpreted as volition; (5) matter is phenomenal; and (6) personality is the key to ultimate reality.

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30. In "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," American Journal of Theology VIII (April 1904): 225-239, Coe referred to Schiller at the point where he stressed the importance of personal idealism in the movement, n. 3, p. 228. In "What is Pragmatism," Methodist Quarterly Review LVII (April 1908): 211-219, he referred to Schiller stating that Schiller's humanism and pragmatism "are, in fact, practically convertible terms," n. 2, p. 215.

31. F. C. S. Schiller, Humanism (London: Macmillan Co., 1903).

32. Kenneth Winetrout, in F. C. S. Schiller and the Dimensions of Pragmatism (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1967), p. 10, identified Charles S. Peirce with the analytical dimension of pragmatism; William James and F. C. S. Schiller with the existential; and Dewey with the social reformist dimension. He also noted, p. 16, that Bertrand Russell called James the religious protagonist of pragmatism; Schiller, the literary; and Dewey, the scientific. Coe's pragmatism lost its existential and religious dimension as he moved closer to Dewey's scientific and social reformist interests almost exclusively.

33. In a letter dated November 12, 1902, Bowne wrote Coe, "Already I have read most of it with pure and perfect satisfaction so sane and helpful a contribution to the better understanding of the truth of the Gospel (sic)," on file with the Coe Papers, Yale Divinity School.

34. Reviewed in Chicago Chronicle, Review Section, October 28, 1902; Chicago Evening Post, October 28, 1902; the Methodists on the whole took a dim view, but it was extensively reviewed in Christian Advocate, December 3, 10, and 24, 1903.

35. G. Campbell Morgan in East Northfield (Mass.) Record of Christian Work, June 1, 1903, wrote, "Those who abide by the authority of Scripture, and by the atonement of Christ as the only method of salvation, would be compelled to say that the truer title would be 'the irreligion of an immature mind'"; quoted in Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation," p. 37. Coe called the comment "delicious" in "My Own Little Theatre," p. 104.

36. Coe, The Religion of a Mature Mind, p. 48. Knudson, The Philosophy of Personalism, pp. 250-257, listed four articles in the personalist attitude toward religion, all of which are identifiable in Coe's works: (1) personalism maintains "the autonomous validity of religion"; (2) personalism distinguished religion and science in such a way that there can be no conflict between them; (3) personalism insists the philosophic implications of religion are better grounded logically than those of any competing world view; (4) personalism holds that religion is something richer and deeper than philosophy

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and there can be no rationalist substitute for Christianity.

37. Coe, Religion of a Mature Mind, p. 58.

38. Ibid., p. 54.

39. Ibid., Preface, p. 9.

40. Ibid., p. 149.

41. Ibid., p. 120.

42. Reverence for personality became a slogan for the Christian liberals according to Smith, Handy, and Loetscher, American Christianity, II, p. 259. See also "The Golden Age of Liberal Theology," in Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, pp. 779-780. Coe, in an exchange with Henry Nelson Wieman in the 1930's, stated, "I refuse to call divine any cosmic power which does not value persons," Religious Education XXIII: 167-169. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 100, noted that his Rochester graduation oration on "The Personal Element in History" contained the idea of selfhood "which was to be a life long pursuit."

43. Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation," p. 78, quoted W. M. Urban's review in Philosophical Review (January 1901): 99-101, that The Religion of a Mature Mind represented "a norm defining itself."

44. Typical of the traditional Methodist emphasis of the period is Edward N. Cantwell's Personal Salvation: A Treatment of the Doctrines of Conversion and Christian Experience (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1903) with its dedication "to a Methodist ancestry that for five generations has enjoyed the power and upheld the doctrines of personal salvation."

45. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 101.

46. Ibid., pp. 100-101.

47. Merle Curti well balanced the scientific and romantic elements in Hall's research as well as the conservative and liberal strains in his thinking in The Social Ideas of American Educators, Chapter 12. Conger, Adolescence and Youth, p. 9, wrote that although Hall was a romantic apologist for the assets of youth, "his elitist notions seem at times painfully prescient to those who have lived to witness the subsequent development of Hitler's elite youth."

48. G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence: Its Psychology and its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education, Volume 1 (New York: Appleton,

1904-1905), p. 94. Hall continued that adolescence is the only point of departure for the "superanthroid that man has become."

49. G. Stanley Hall and T. H. Saunders, "Pity," American Journal of Psychology XI (1900): 590-591.

50. Coe's treatment of "adolescent difficulties" in Chapter 2 of The Spiritual Life was sane and matter of fact, but yet he showed insight into youthful needs noting that even after all their physiological needs have been met, their deepest need is for sympathy. "These neophytes," he wrote, "entering with fear and trembling upon their initiation into manhood and womanhood, do not ask our pity, but they do need to get acquainted with us so as to find out how grown persons feel and think and act. Once more, it is the revelation of humanity, which is the revelation of divinity, that heals the woes of the world," pp. 88-89.

51. Ibid., p. 88.

52. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 94. This autobiographical essay appeared in Religion in Transition, edited by Vergilius Ferm, together with essays by S. Radhakrishnon, the Indian idealist philosopher; C. F. Andrews, the Church of England missionary to India; Alfred Loisy, the French Catholic, excommunicated for his historical-critical study of the Bible; James H. Leuba, Swiss-born American psychologist of religion (who disgressed to point out that he learned at Clark that President Hall was a hypocrit about his religious beliefs); and Edward Diller Starbuck of Hoosier Quaker background, who wrote of his religious training that moral laws were not taught, they were written on the heart. Ferm said of Coe, Starbuck, and Leuba that the three were pioneers in the twentieth century born science of psychology of religion. Coe acknowledged his indebtedness to Leuba, Starbuck, and Daniels in The Spiritual Life, p. 13, notes 1, 2, and 3.

53. A. H. Daniels, "The New Life: A Study of Regeneration," American Journal of Psychology VI (1893): 61-106.

54. James H. Leuba, "A Study in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena," American Journal of Psychology VII (1896): 309-385.

55. Ibid., p. 310.

56. Edward Diller Starbuck, "A Study of Conversion," American Journal of Psychology VIII (1897): 268-308, delivered as two lectures before the Harvard Religious Union in 1894 and 1895; and "Some Aspects of Religious Growth," American Journal of Psychology IX (1898): 70-124. On p. 120 Starbuck noted that the way in which religious certainty may be

reached was largely dependent upon personality. Coe based his 1899 research on this hypothesis, "A Study of the Dynamics of Personal Religion," Chapter 3 of The Spiritual Life. See pp. 107-108 for Coe's references to Starbuck's "clue."

57. Starbuck in "Religion's Use of Me," in Religion in Transition, wrote that he lent his notes to James while the latter was preparing his Gifford lectures, but that he had to protect himself from Hall, who sought to appropriate his questionnaire for his own research. Hall, he wrote, had a mind hungry for prestige, pp. 224, 231. Later Starbuck widened his studies to include the role of religion in the formation of character. In the 1920's he was director of the Iowa Institute of Character Research.

58. Summarized by Coe in The Spiritual Life, pp. 39-47. Also in William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902 (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), pp. 198-199. Both based on Edward D. Starbuck's findings in The Psychology of Religion (London, 1899). Coe was unable to read Starbuck's book before his own The Spiritual Life went to press (1900), p. 13, n. 3, but he had access, of course, to his 1898 and 1899 articles. James wrote the Preface to Starbuck's book and Coe reviewed it in Philosophical Review (September 1900): 555-556.

59. Coe, The Spiritual Life, p. 47. James, The Varieties of Religion Experience, summed up the same data with the observation that "conversion is in its essence a normal adolescent phenomenon, incidental to the passage from the child's small universe to the wider intellectual and spiritual life of maturity," p. 199.

60. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Chap. 1. Coe dealt with this by noting that the correlation between adolescence and conversion was but one more illustration of the meaning of the Incarnation, i.e., that the divine was fully expressed in the human, The Spiritual Life, Chap. 2.

61. Frequently in his chapters on conversion, James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, referred to the work of Starbuck (Preface and pp. 200, 204, 208-210, 249-250); Leuba (pp. 201, 240-241, 246-247); and Coe (pp. 240-241).

62. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," noted that Bowne's rejection of the newly emerging field of scientific psychology as "superfluous or worse" widened the distance between them, pp. 100-101.

63. Coe, The Spiritual Life, Preface, pp. 5-6. All classical norms for Christian experience must be surrendered, he wrote, including the biblical norm of conversion, p. 7.

64. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp. 21-22.

65. Coe, The Spiritual Life, pp. 141-142.

66. *Ibid*., p. 16. Commenting on the empirical method, Coe noted that "revival preachers took the first step in this method when they gathered statistics concerning the age at which large numbers of persons were converted," p. 12.

67. *Ibid*., pp. 15-18.

68. *Ibid*., p. 110.

69. *Ibid*., p. 112.

70. *Ibid*., p. 113.

71. *Ibid*., pp. 118-119. For a description of the traditional temperaments, see below, p. 109.

72. *Ibid*., p. 120.

73. Coe listed uncontrollable laughter, a powerful thrill through the body, and involuntary clapping of hands as automatisms, *Ibid*., p. 124. In his The Psychology of Religion, p. 193, he included as automatisms involuntary muscular reactions of many sorts that give the impression to the subject that his body is partly or wholly controlled by a will other than his own. The Methodist phrase, "getting the power," applied to extreme loss of muscular control, manifested by falling and lying prone for a period. Glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, is another form of automatism which has played a major role in the history of the Christian churches; 1 Corinthians 14 contains Paul's evaluation that speaking in tongues was of less benefit to the church than intelligent prophecy and encouragement. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, discussed automatisms, pp. 233-235.

74. Coe, The Spiritual Life, p. 127.

75. *Ibid*., p. 125.

76. *Ibid*., pp. 128-137.

77. *Ibid*., p. 141.

78. *Ibid*.

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79. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

80. Starbuck noted, however, that "persons who have passed through conversion, having once taken a stand for religious life, tend to feel themselves identified with it, no matter how much their religious enthusiasm declines," *Psychology of Religion*, p. 357.

81. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 249. In his Preface to *Education in Religion and Morals*, Coe noted that religious nurture must be brought under "more complete control," p. 6.

82. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 144. Quoted by James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 241.

83. Chapter 5, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 205-260.

84. *Ibid.*, pp. 206-207. Coe noted that Lotze identified the sanguine temperament with childhood, the melancholic with youth, the choleric with maturity, and the phlegmatic with old age, p. 231.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

86. *Ibid.*

87. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*, p. 259. An excellent guide to the "liberal lives of Jesus" is Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest for the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1956; first published in 1906 under the title *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*). Schweitzer's conclusion was that we can "know" only the Jesus remembered by the church as Lord. The Jesus of history is no longer accessible to us. This 1906 work signaled a reaction to the previously dominant historicism of Harnack. It was an early challenge to a liberalism which based itself on history. But Coe never responded to the scholarly reinterpretation in New Testament studies which led to the work of Bultmann and Barth in the 1920's. In 1924 in *What Ails Our Youth*?, he wrote, "I shall further take for granted that the simple conduct and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth show the way for social aspiration and for real social growth," p. 38.

90. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, contrasted the "once born" and "twice born" types, pp. 80, 166, 363, 488. To illustrate the orthodox distrust of the highly moral, once born type, James cited the anecdote of the New England minister who declared that Dr. Channing "is excluded from the highest form of religious life by the extraordinary rectitude of his character," p. 488.

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91. Paul's understanding of the inability of man to fulfill the law is summarized in Romans 3:20, "for no human being will be just in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin," and 5:20, "Law came in to increase the trespass," both from Revised Standard Version.

92. In his "Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans," Luther wrote "this epistle is in truth the most important document in the New Testament, the gospel in its purest expression," John Dillenberger, ed., Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 19. See also Martin Luther, Lectures on Romans, trans. and ed. by Wilhelm Pauck (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961). Erik H. Erikson sought to determine whether the brooding despair of Luther was geistlich (spiritual) or geistig (mental) in his Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History (New York: W. W. Norton, Inc., 1958), Chapter 2, "The Fit in the Choir."

93. Religious Education XXIII (1928): 616.

94. See above Chapter I, pp. 15-19.

95. Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952).

96. Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, pp. 405-406.

97. Ibid., p. 210.

98. Ibid., p. 406.

99. Methodist Quarterly Review LVII (April 1908): 211-219.

100. James, Pragmatism--A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking: Popular Lectures on Philosophy (New York: Longmans Green and Co., 1907).

101. James, "What Pragmatism Means," Lecture Two in Pragmatism and reprinted in Essays in Pragmatism by William James, edited and with an Introduction by Alburey Castell (New York: Hafner Pub. Co., 1948), pp. 141-158. James called pragmatism "the principle of Peirce," first enunciated in Charles Peirce's "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," Popular Science Monthly XII (January 1878).

102. Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The Thirteen Pragmatisms," Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Method V (January 1908: 29-39.

103. James, "What Pragmatism Means," p. 144.

104. Ibid., p. 146, in italics in the original.

105. *Ibid*.

106. *Ibid*., p. 144.

107. *Ibid*., p. 147.

108. *Ibid*.

109. *Ibid*., in italics in the original.

110. Coe, "What is Pragmatism," pp. 213-214.

111. *Ibid*., p. 214.

112. *Ibid*.

113. *Ibid*., p. 216.

114. *Ibid*.

115. *Ibid*., p. 217.

116. *Ibid*.

117. *Ibid*.

118. James was especially pointed in his article, "What Psychical Research Has Accomplished," originally published in *Scribner's* (March 1890) and reprinted in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (New York: Longmans Green and Co., 1897), pp. 295-327. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 109, he wrote, "The first thing to bear in mind (especially if we ourselves belong the clerical-academic-scientific type, the officially and conventionally 'correct' type, 'the deadly respectable' type, for which to ignore others is a besetting temptation) is that nothing can be more stupid than to bar out phenomena from our notice, merely because we are incapable of taking part in anything like them ourselves."

119. Coe, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," p. 130.

120. Gay Wilson Allen, *William James: A Biography* (New York: Viking Press, 1967), p. xii, noted that from the age of eighteen to his death at sixty-eight, "James's life was a struggle to overcome crippling neurosis."

121. Commenting on the "healthy minded" in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 91, James wrote that "the advance of liberalism, so called, in Christianity, during the past fifty years may fairly be called a victory of healthy-mindedness . . . the idea of a universal evolution lends

itself to a doctrine of general meliorism and progressivism which fits the religious needs of the healthy minded so well that it seems almost as if it might have been created for their use"; the description of healthy-mindedness well fitted Coe.

122. In _What is Christian Education?_ (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), pp. 121-122, Coe noted that personality can grow through sinning; his example was that of a student caught cheating during a Logic exam who later became a bank official!

123. James, "The Will to Believe," delivered as an address before the Philosophical Clubs of Yale and Brown Universities was published in the _New World_ (June 1896) and reprinted in _Essays in Pragmatism_, pp. 88-109. Coe's college act of willing to believe must have occurred around 1882.

124. James, _The Varieties of Religious Experience_, p. 454; Coe, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," pp. 130-131.

125. Coe, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," p. 131.

126. _Ibid_.

127. _Ibid_.

128. _Ibid_.

129. _Ibid_., p. 132.

130. _Ibid_., p. 133.

131. _Ibid_., p. 132.

132. _Ibid_., p. 134.

133. _Ibid_.

134. _Ibid_., p. 135. Starbuck later wrote that he was "impaled" by Coe's trenchant criticism, "Religion's Use of Me," p. 204.

135. Coe, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," p. 135.

136. _Ibid_., p. 136.

137. _Ibid_.

138. _Ibid_.

139. _Ibid_.

140. Coe, "Religious Value," pp. 253-254. Quoted from "Zend-Avesta" in Sacred Books of the East, vol. 4 (Oxford 1880).

141. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

142. *Ibid.*

143. *Ibid.*, p. 254.

144. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

145. Harold Høffding (1843-1931), Danish philosopher, published *The Problems of Philosophy*, trans. by Galen M. Fisher and with a Preface by William James (New York: Macmillan, 1905) and *The Philosophy of Religion*, trans. from the German edition (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1906). Coe referred to Høffding frequently in his *Psychology of Religion*, pp. ix, 11, 55, 71, 296, 350.

CHAPTER IV

THE HUMAN NATURALNESS OF RELIGION

From his first book published in 1900 to his death in 1951, Coe was devoted to the social ideal in Christianity, yet there is a quality of personal and intellectual isolation in his work which grows progressively more marked over the half century. He believed that conversation among friends revealed the reality of selfhood as no other human experience did, yet, with the exception of the well documented The Psychology of Religion, his later books reveal him as increasingly withdrawn from interaction with other theorists and colleagues. Some amount of such intellectual solitariness was due, of course, to advancing age, but the tendency was present from the beginning. Coe's article, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," has a special biographical significance since it is one of the few writings which reveal him in direct dialogue with someone whose position he challenged. Characteristically, Coe, once his own thinking was clarified, did not dialogue with those whose intellectual positions he outgrew, abandoned, or opposed. He moved forward following the beat of his own drummer, heedless of the size of the parade, but confident he marched in the vanguard.[1]

This quality of intellectual isolation is particularly noteworthy in Coe, for one might expect other persons to figure prominently in the writings of someone whose values were rooted in personalism. But Coe's writings, always clear and concise, have about them something of an Olympian detachment so that in describing his style one could aptly apply to him Oliver Wendell Holmes' comment on Dewey: he writes as God would write if he were articulate.[2]

Holmes, however, must have had some up-to-date, rationalistic God in mind when he made his comment, for the book which according to orthodox teaching the articulate God of Israel authored was indeed a book abounding in persons and events of frailty, extravagence, weakness, and ecstasy--qualities conspicuously lacking in both Dewey's and Coe's works. Simplicity and objectivity are typically virtues in writing, but in Coe's style they sometimes become troublesome to the reader. In his later works particularly, simplicity frequently became simplification and objectivity suggested omniscence. In his quest for the orderly laws which might underlie religious experience, Coe was turning away from variety which, as William James celebrated it, was, indeed, the spice of religion and toward a normalization of religious experience which although compelling at one level held out the suspicion of uniformity at another level. Over the years Coe's "steady impatience"[3] with the concept of conversion prompted him to turn away from the saltatory, the spontaneous, and the uncontrollable element in religion and turn toward a concept which would permit continuous, purposeful, and controlled direction of the religious life.

William James once complained of the weariness he experienced after a week at Chautauque lecturing to earnest, sober, religious citizens. "I have learned a lot," he wrote, "but I'm glad to get into something less blameless. The flash of a pistol, a dagger, or a devilish eye, anything to break the unlovely level of ten thousand good people--a crime, murder, rape, elopment, anything would do."[4] Such an outburst seems alien to the personality of Coe, at least to that part of his personality which has survived in his writings and in recorded reminiscence. Coe's books reveal the posture of a man who stood inflexibly at moral attention all his life. Viewing the evidence, a biographer has to conclude that Coe's life was one long Chautauqua: earnest, inspiring, vigorous, and intelligent, but finally somewhat tedious in its prolongation of a single moral mood.

P. T. Forsythe, an English theologian, commented of religious liberals that they lacked the ethical realism of a Carlyle or an Ibsen; morally they reside in the respectable quiet of the West End. Liberals, he wrote, often joined the finest critical faculty and the most scholarly apparatus with a simple moral nature somehow unequal to the actual world. Often reared in a manse and cradled in the godliness of a Christian home, they have, he continued, "lived in an unwordly purity and have never been drawn from the jaws of hell."[5] The lives of such liberals, proceeding quietly and soberly with no major breaks or crises, are essentially "still lives." The continuity they celebrate in theory is the motif of their own life and thought.

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This portrait of a liberal penned in 1908 captures something which is prominent in Coe. His was a "still life" in many ways: movement, place, events, persons barely ripple the surface of a placid, serene, continuing quest for meaning within intellectual perimeters early laid out and never redrawn. A close friend writing after Coe's death noted that he pursued his intellectual quest with "remarkable objectivity and undeviating consistency."[6] His objectivity and consistency are readily apparent in his 1908 articles reviewed in the previous chapter; the remainder of this study will reveal with how much tenacity he pursued the implications of the position he outlined in them.

Life was stilled for Coe not only in the sense that his life was essentially contained in the even flow of consistently developing thought; but life was stilled tragically for Coe when his wife died. For most of the years at Northwestern Sadie was by his side and their personal happiness shed a glow around those years which only deepened for Coe in retrospect. Suddenly in the late summer of 1905 just as they were preparing to make their first visit to Europe since their student days, Sadie became ill and died within a few days from a previously unsuspected cancer. The blow was a severe one for Coe who found in his happy marriage "something of awe, of reverence, of fulfilling a mission."[7] In the dedication of his first book, he quoted Lowell's lines to suggest the impact of Sadie's personality upon the home they created together: "Twas nothing that I can phrase, But the whole dumb dwelling grew conscious, And put on her looks and ways."[8]

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Her death deepened in him the conviction that personality is immortal and he hoped for a reunion with her after his own death. With controlled emotion he wrote her biography, giving it the title, Sadie Knowland Coe: A Chapter in a Life,[9] suggesting his faith that somewhere other chapters were being added to her life. For years afterward Coe brought her portrait each summer up to the camp he built in Lonely Lake, Canada, and adorned it with flowers found in the woods.[10] As noted earlier, Coe's rejection of mysticism was based on his identification of mysticism with a fallacious view of knowledge but in his hope of immortality, his honoring of the dead, and his humility before the mystery of death, he revealed much of a mystic's reverence. In a rare personal statement, Coe summed up the meaning he found in his loss:

> Her affection . . . was such a self giving and self forgetting as makes credible the love of God wherein all meaning is. The object upon which such affection is lavished can never henceforth become poor. Time and death and eternity have found their meaning for him, and that meaning is good. Death cannot rob him, because the love that makes separation so tragic is itself the realization of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The very intensity of the suffering is evidence that death is swallowed up in victory.[11]

Facing one of the chapter headings, he placed the brief words of Jesus: "She is not dead" (Luke 8:52) and the poetry of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "What is excellent, As god lives, is permanent; Hearts are dust, heart's lives remain; Heart's love will meet thee again."[12]

Coe was forty-three years old when his wife died; he lived on another forty-six years and in the last of them found

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himself eager to escape the burden of their emptiness. But he dealt with his desire for death and his wrestling with the ethics of euthanasia as he did with his hope of immortality. With clarity and dispassion and from the perspective of the social value to be realized in them, he probed the outer limits of our knowing to see if what he deemed valuable was possible.[13]

Long afterward he described Sadie as a very human person who taught him the human naturalness of religion.[14] He learned from her that religion, if it is possible, is necessary. This is almost a one sentence summary of Coe's intellectual life work. He always remained faithful to the proposition that if it is possible to preserve religion within an intellectual perspective fully responsive to the claims of science and society, it is necessary to find such a religion. But despite her legacy to him, with her death a source of vitality and variety went out of Coe's life, and the stillness of his reflection only deepened.

Coe's books had been appearing at two year intervals--The Spiritual Life in 1900, The Religion of a Mature Mind in 1902, Education in Religion and Morals in 1904--but, save for the critical articles of 1908, Coe wrote nothing of significance until 1916 when The Psychology of Religion appeared. His reaction to the loss of Sadie may account in part for this long hiatus in scholarly production, but it is more likely that the reorganization of his interest around the process of religious education required time to come to completion. In 1908, after several years of reflection, he made a major career decision and in the fall of 1909 assumed a new appointment at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

Charles Cuthbert Hall, president of Union, may have spoken to Coe about a position at the seminary as early as 1904. Hall was elected president of the Religious Education Association at its second meeting that year and Coe, along with John Dewey, now a member of the philosophy faculty of Columbia University, was elected to the policy-making council of the R. E. A.[15] Two years later when Coe received an offer to become professor of religious education at the University of Chicago, Northwestern, eager to keep him, worked out an "adjustment" which led to his remaining in Evanston. At this time he told the dean that "a position was developing in the East, which, if it should mature, he would wish to accept."[16] The position did mature and in the spring or summer of 1908 he accepted an invitation to become the Skinner and McAlpin Professor of Practical Theology and Director of the Department of Religious Education at Union.

Given Coe's admitted indifference to theology, this career shift seems puzzling, but on examination there are several reasons why he might have thought that a seminary like Union offered him more scope for the development of his interests than Northwestern. The strength of the Methodist tradition lay in its instence upon experience as the test of Christian faith and not conformity to a creed. This distinctive note made the

Methodist church far more responsive to liberalism than, for example, the Presbyterians who were committed to a formal creedal statement in the Westminster Confession of Faith.[17] But Coe's studies into the psychological causes of conversions led him to become anathema to many Methodists for whom experience was synonymous with a particular kind of emotional and instantaneous conversion. Shortly after one of his early books appeared, a minister in the Rock River Conference which still supported Northwestern published a pamphlet with the resounding title, "A Protest Against Rationalistic Teachings and Teachers in Our Evangelical Schools and Theological Seminaries: Forty Reasons Why We Should Cry Aloud and Spare Not." The author criticized professors like Coe as "self-important and self-boasting scholars" urging that Methodist schools find professors who "had not bowed their knee to Baal."[18]

In the summer of 1908 Coe gave an address to a church group at the Des Plaines Campground. The circumstances are difficult to trace now, but apparently the papers reported Coe's address in a way that made a sensation among Methodists, some of whom were ready to accuse him of heresy. It may be surmised that Coe expressed his view of conversion as a "will-act" and not an outpouring of "the Power" before an audience of laity in the unlikely setting of an old-fashioned camp meeting. This public notoriety, coming at a time when his resignation from Northwestern was announced, apparently led to speculation that the university was dropping him because of his controversial views. Northwestern, embarrassed at the charge, sought to mollify those who were raising the issue of academic freedom by retaining Coe's name on its academic roster as an honorary professor. Whatever the actual situation may have been, Coe's attachment to Northwestern was strong enough to make him value the status; he retained the title honorary professor until his death. In 1927 he received an L.L.D. degree from Northwestern.[19]

In contrast to the situation at Northwestern, Coe may have seen Union as something of an intellectual haven. Union had already passed through its struggle with religious conservatives, severing its institutional ties with the Presbyterian Church in 1892 rather than impose any standard on its faculty which would curtail their academic freedom. In 1891, Professor C. A. Briggs, at Union since 1874, delivered an inauguration address on the occasion of assuming a new chair in biblical theology. His inaugural was a vigorous defense of modern biblical scholarship and an equally vigorous condemnation of the "inerrancy dogma" so pronounced among conservative Presbyterians holding to what is usually called "the Princeton theology." In an uncompromising speech, marred by an arrogance which disturbed even some of his supporters, Briggs listed the barriers which he believed the Bible presented to a belief in God. Among these were superstitious reverence or bibliolatry, emphasis upon verbal inspiration, authenticity of imputed authorship, inerrancy, miracles, and predictive prophecy. Of bibliolatry he noted that the Bible would not stop a bullet any better than a Catholic Mass-book. Commenting on the authenticity of the various books of the Bible, he wrote,

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> The great mass of the Old Testament was written by authors whose names or connection with their writings are lost in oblivion. If this is destroying the Bible, the Bible is destroyed already.[20]

The criticism which arose within the Presbyterian Church was strong enough to sustain a charge of heresy against Briggs who was suspended from the Presbyterian ministry. Union, whose faculty and board supported Briggs throughout his trial, formally withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church following his conviction.[21] Several years later, Union's professor of church history, A. T. McGiffert, resigned from the Presbyterian ministry rather than submit to church discipline in his research and teaching.[22] By 1900 scholars at Union had developed a new image of a seminary committed to academic integrity above denominational loyalty. Union's reputation as an independent center for the unhindered study of Christianity under the canons of modern scholarship would have made it very attractive to Coe by 1909.

There were many indices at that time that the liberals might become as dominant in the church as they already were in the field of scholarship. The Presbyterian Church officially modified the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1906 in order to move closer to the American Protestant consensus on a free rather than a determined will in the matter of salvation.[23] Charles W. Eliot in the summer of 1909 gave an address outlining "The Religion of the Future," which quite clearly, was the religion of the liberals.[24] Eliot, a prestigious educator recently resigned from the presidency of Harvard after a forty year tenure,[25] signaled in his address a subtle shift in the status of liberalism: liberalism was no longer a theological innovation, it was the inevitable wave of the future.

Eliot saw twentieth century religion as fully in harmony with the great secular movements of modern society: democracy, individuality, social idealism, zeal for education, and the spirit of objective research. All these, announced Eliot, were in agreement "with the direct, personal teachings of Jesus." "The new religion," he wrote, ". . . proposes as a basis of unity first, its doctrine of an immanent and loving God, and secondly, its precept, Be serviceable to fellow-men."[26] He predicted that the religion of the future would be immanental, not transcendental; monistic, not dualistic; naturalistic, and not supernaturalistic. While it might exclude many of the consolations of the religion of the past, the religion of the future would take a positive rather than a passive approach to evil and seek out ways of resisting and preventing all that thwarts human good.

The immanent God of the future would be a combination of the Jewish Jehovah, the Christian Universal Father, modern physic's inexhaustible Energy and biology's conception of Vital Force. "Literally and explicitly," it would be true of the believers of the religion to come that they would live and move and have their being in the God they worshipped. Slowly but inexorably the authoritarianism, the anthropomorphism, the ascetism, the sacrificialism, and the individualism of the old faith would yield to the new faith which would be the "multiplication to infinity of all man's noblest, tenerest, most potent qualities." The priests of the religion of the future would be "trained in the best methods of improving the social and industrial conditions of modern life."[27] In summary, he saw the religion of the future standing in relation to the religion of the past as an adult to a child.

Two years before, the ministers and laity of the Methodist Federation for Social Service proved their fitness according to Eliot's criterion to be priests of the new faith. Coe was one of the first members of the Federation which worked actively for various social reforms, and served as a dedicated lobby within the denomination for the promotion of the social interpretation of Christianity. The Federation drafted a Social Creed for Methodists which was later adopted by the newly formed interdenominational Federal Council of Churches as a guideline for social action.[28] The Creed specified that the Methodist Church should stand for the following:

> 1. complete justice for all men in all stations of life;
> 2. conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes;
> 3. workmen's compensation;
> 4. abolition of child labor;
> 5. regulations of the conditions of labor of women;
> 6. suppression of the 'sweating system';
> 7. gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of work 'to the degree of leisure which is the condition of the highest human life';
> 8. a six day week;
> 9. a living wage in every industry;
> 10. the adoption of the principle of the equitable division of the products of industry.[29]

The Federation recommended that the Golden Rule and "the mind of Christ" be recognized as "the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social sins." It summoned the Methodist Church

> . . . to continue and increase its works of social service . . . to patient study of these problems and to the fearless but judicial preaching of the teachings of Jesus in their significance for the moral interest of modern society.[30]

It was the first and most famous creedal statement of the social Christianity which had been maturing in American Protestantism for a quarter of a century.[31] It summarized the thrust of Walter Rauschenbusch's Christianity and the Social Crisis published in 1907. Rauschenbusch focused on Jesus as a prophet in the line of the great social prophets of Israel in a book which so articulated the social interpretation of the scriptures that it led him to overnight national prominence. In the books of Rauschenbusch and those of the Congregational theologian, Washington Gladden, the Bible became a source of ethical standards to guide the transformation of industrial capitalism toward a spiritual resolution of its iniquities and tensions.[32] By 1909 the church was singing the new creed in a hymn written by Frank Mason North, pastor of a Methodist church on the East side of Manhattan: "Where cross the crowded ways of life, Where sound the noise of race and clan, Above the sound of selfish strife, We hear thy voice, O Son of Man."[33]

Clearly the social interpretation of Christianity was becoming official: it was generating new institutional forms like the Methodist Federation of Social Service; forming a canon around the works of Rauschenbusch and Gladden; codifying its message in a new social creed; and even developing its own hymnody.[34] In 1900 Coe wrote that the Christianity of the future would be a completely social Christianity; by 1909 he was seeing that social Christianity take shape in the present. In America the old mot that the Church of England was the Tory Party on its knees was being reversed. The Social Gospel movement might aptly be called "the praying wing of American progressivism" and nowhere were the prayers for a new social awakening being offered up more fervently than at Union.[35]

Francis G. Peabody, dean of the Harvard Divinity School and author of Jesus Christ and the Social Question presided over the R. E. A. when it met in Chicago in 1909 to explore the theme, "Religious Education and Social Duty." The broad attendance of the 1903 conference was duplicated at this session which heard addresses from Ella Flagg Young, the brilliant teacher whom Dewey acknowledged turned his educational theory into practice; Jane Addams, founder of the most famous American social settlement, Chicago's Hull House; and James H. Tufts, philosopher of the University of Chicago. Coe, recently honored by his alma mater, Rochester, with a doctor of laws degree and having assumed the direction of the first religious education program in a major seminary, was elected president for the coming year by an association still at the crest of its influence and prestige.[36] Professionally, 1909 was an auspicious year for Coe.

Among his new responsibilities at Union was the supervision of a laboratory school begun under the leadership of Frank McMurray of Teachers College about eight years before.[37]

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The origin of this laboratory school indicates how closely intertwined religious education was with the theory and practice of the new progressive education. McMurray joined the Teachers' College faculty in 1898 and sometime after that developed an experimental Sunday School in response to the need of faculty parents for a religious education which would express the psychological and pedagogical principles of their children's weekday progressive education. Conventional Sunday schools of the period were in Coe's phrase "flat and stale" to the children used to a weekday curriculum stressing social experience and permitting participation in important social enterprises. Church leaders like President Hall, and laity, like the faculty parents at Teachers College, recognized that the social values introduced into the school curriculum by progressive educators were vitally connected with the social values which were then transforming Christian theology and ethics.[38]

Professor McMurray had a sensitive interest in the religious development of children and his study of the educational philosophy of Johann Friedrich Herbart predisposed him further to the importance of the moral education of children. German disciples of Herbart in the third quarter of the nineteenth century fused his psychological and philosophical theory into an educational methodology which brought intellectual stimulation and scientific rigor into the education of teachers in both Europe and America.[39] Herbart gave the centuries' old principle that the goal of education was an ethical one a new vigor in his insistence that the development of moral character was dependent on a broad ranging social education. His pedagogy was based upon the belief that the ideal character is achieved by the balanced, harmonious development of the individual through "many-sided interests." The Herbartian pedagogy and the Herbartian emphasis upon wide ranging interests made the Sunday morning sessions held in the classrooms of Teachers College strikingly different from the average American Sunday school of the turn of the century.

Teachers College itself was an institutional expression of the new education.[40] Founded under the guidance of Nicholas Murray Butler, it received its permanent charter in 1892 and became the nation's foremost institution for educating teachers when James Earl Russell became dean in 1897. The sometimes ambiguous arrangement between the College and Columbia University, under which the College functioned as the pedagogical department of the University, testified both to the uneasy foothold of education in the curriculum of the university and to the dramatic gains which the teaching profession had made in prestige and professionalism under the stimulus of the progressive education movement.

Progressive education was so complex a phenomenon that it is not easy to define; Lawrence Cremin's extensive study of the transformation of the schools under the aegis of the progressive impulse never provides any capsule definition. In "My

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Pedagogic Creed," written in 1897, John Dewey did provide in summary form a statement of the social sources contributing to educational reform as well as the social values which animated its practitioners. In the first proposition of his creed, Dewey affirmed social experience as the chief inspiration of the new education: "I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race."[41] He concluded with words which have more than a hint of biblical rhetoric in them: "I believe that . . . the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and usherer in of the true kingdom of God."[42]

Composed ten years before the Social Creed of the Churches, Dewey's creed bears a similar relationship to the progressive education movement as did the social creed to the Social Gospel movement: educational theory slowly maturing for a quarter of a century was now given eloquent and compact expression.

In 1909 when Union Seminary moved to new quarters on Broadway and 120th Street, just across the street from Teachers College, the seminary was asked to take over the direction of the experimental Sunday school which was soon thereafter renamed the Union School of Religion. This seemed an appropriate cooperation between the two institutions; for as Coe phrased it, the progressive education taught at Teachers College touched the heart of the religion dedicated to turning society into a brotherhood taught at Union.[43] Thirty years later, when a new theological conservatism dominated the Union faculty, it was frequently said that the street separating the two institutions was the widest in the world; but in 1909 the street which separated Teachers College, inspired by the social ideal in education, and Union, inspired by the social ideal in religion, was a narrow one for the students from both institutions who regularly crossed it as they worked together in the Union School of Religion. Before another decade passed, Dewey wrote the definitive canon for the new education in Democracy and Education (1916) and Coe published the book which became the scriptures of the religious educators, The Social Theory of Religious Education (1917).

Coe's years of teaching the history and philosophy of pedagogy at Northwestern made him thoroughly familiar with the theoretical sources of the new progressivism in education. At Northwestern the course which surveyed the contribution of theorists to education, a course somewhat misleading called "The Great Educators," followed what was already the standard curriculum for such foundation courses. Students surveyed the work of Comenius, Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart. In the history of education course, students read Compayre's History of Pedagogy, Quick's Essays on Educational Reformers, Munroe's The Educational Ideal, Boone's Education in the United States, and Eliot's Educational Reform. At different times both James' and Dewey's Psychology were used in the general psychology courses.[44]

By 1904-1905 Coe's former student, then colleague, Walter Dill Scott, handled the courses in the history and philosophy of education. Coe taught the history of philosophy course (a general review of the works of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant) as well as a general introduction to philosophic problems. The second semester of this latter course was described in the university catalogue as "Popular Discussions in Philosophy" providing

> Lectures, papers, and discussions, all bearing upon the relation of philosophy to the life of our day, particularly to its science, its literature, and its social and religious aspirations.[45]

In his advanced history of philosophy course students were required to make a critical study of some problem and present the results in the form of a thesis.

Coe also taught several courses in ethics and philosophy of religion. In addition he taught a course described in the catalogue as including

> . . . the philosophy of education, with special reference to religion and morals, a study of the religious development of the child, and a study of the various institutions for the training of character, such as the family, the Sunday School, associations of children and youth, the public schools and college.[46]

During his last year at Northwestern Coe offered a new reading course in advanced ethics. The catalogue noted ". . . that for the year 1908-1909 the topic is the Ethics of Christianity with special reference to the present Social Movement."[47]

This belief review of Coe's teaching responsibilities at Northwestern indicates the broad range of his academic interests and his professional competence to undertake the task of developing a theoretical base for a religious education

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which would be responsive to the developments in general education, the new psychology and the social interpretation of Christianity. Coe lacked one thing. He had little or no familiarity with children. One of the teachers who worked with Professor McMurray in the early years of the experimental Sunday school and later in the Union School of Religion recalled Coe's sympathy with the aims of the school, but noted he knew very little about the actual practice of religious education.[48] Nearing fifty when he moved to Union, and with no previous experience working with children, there is little evidence that Coe sought out opportunities in the school for direct observation of children or even direct participation in teaching. Nor did Coe involve himself in the direct supervision of the school. A young colleague at Union, Hugh Harthshorne, was given the responsibility for the actual operation of the school.[49]

Coe's books reveal how much his overriding concern was with the theory of religious education and not the praxis of teaching. Only scattered references to actual incidents or specific teaching techniques appear in his books.[50] Although he wrote that something new was arising so insistently from within the church's practice that it demanded theoretical formulation, this seems a statement reflecting more his general belief that theory arises out of practice than his actual order of priorities.[51] However much the theory of religious education may have grown up out of the practice of the church in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, we can find few references to such practices in Coe. Rather his books are

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uniformly prescriptive in character, not descriptive. Reading them one is placed in the paradoxical situation of being confronted by someone to whom ideas are everything yet who asserts the belief that practice is everything. Like many reformers in the history of education, Coe's claim to the title "great educator" rests almost exclusively upon his significant contribution to the development of educational theory and not upon his actual skill in teaching.

Before reviewing his still influential Psychology of Religion published in 1916, two modifications of his earlier published positions should be noted. Between 1900 and 1904 Coe reversed his position on adolescent conversion; and in the decade between 1904 and 1914 he abandoned key features of Herbartian theory.

In The Spiritual Life, Coe accepted an interpretation of data which pointed to the statistical probability of conversion occurring at mid-adolescence.[52] In Education in Religion and Morals he quietly reversed his position in a footnote, writing

> Contrary to my former view and to the view of Starbuck, I am convinced that early rather than middle adolescence is the more important turning point. Conversions that occur at sixteen or seventeen seem to me to represent cases in which development of the religious sense did not proceed normally during the preceding four or five years; they are essentially an effort to "catch up."[53]

Coe introduced no new empirical evidence to justify this reversal. Rather, the reversal itself led to the reinterpretation of data already cited four years earlier in The Spiritual Life.

In Education in Religion and Morals Coe ennumerated the gains in educational practice brought about by the acceptance of Herbart's recapitulation theory. Ten years later he abandoned the theory as an interpretation of human development. He argued that his earlier view of both adolescent conversion and Herbart's recapitulation theory--especially as both were combined in the psychological theory of G. Stanley Hall--led to an emphasis upon discrete stages of the life of the individual which destroyed the unity of life as a whole.

Herbart's recapitulation theory drew an analogy between embryonic development with its supposed recapitulation of biological evolution and the social development of children and youth which supposedly re-enacted the cultural history of the race.[54] One positive consequence of the theory was that adults were able to appreciate as never before certain spontaneous interest of children and youth. "We find a new meaning, for example," wrote Coe in 1904,

> . . . in boys' gangs when we discover how closely they resemble the tribal form of human organization. Similarly, the temporarily absorbing interest in exploration, hunting, or mimic war at certain ages becomes illuminated.[55]

G. Stanley Hall was, along with Charles and Frank McMurray, a leader among American educators championing the recapitulation theory which, under the name "culture epoch theory," gave a new vigor and a new order to the elementary school curriculum in the United States before World War I.[56] However, as early as 1896, the theory came under critical attack by John Dewey who questioned its arbitrary correlation of stages in the individual life of children with past cultural stages.[57] Dewey emphasized, too, the inadequacy of the theory to support early attention to the actual conditions of modern urban society under which children lived their present lives. Without referring to Dewey's critique but citing experience gained in the Union School of Religion, Coe in an article published in 1914 rejected both Herbart and Hall's formulations of developmental stages in the life of the individual as a basis for the organization of a curriculum for religious education.[58]

Coe also opposed an emphasis upon the distinctiveness of adolescence in Edward Scribner Ames' Psychology of Religious Experience published in 1910.[59] Ames argued that religion, since it was an expression of the highest social values, could not be experienced in childhood but waited upon the awakening of social intelligence in the adolescent years. Coe opposed Ames, as he did Hall, stressing that their theories tended toward the same result as the traditional evangelical emphasis upon conversion. As effectively as the revivalists, they separated religious experience from previous preparation and they separated the religious life from the on-going process of habit formation and critical reflection. Hall's emphasis especially led to all the disadvantages which Coe believed were inherent in the church's reliance upon conversion: it led to occasionalism, suggestibility, and emotionalism.[60] Ames' interpretation, if accepted, would lead to the postponement of social and religious experiences until adolescence was reached.

Both the culture epoch theory and the interpretation of adolescent religious life were critical issues for Coe who saw their combined thrust as inimical to the principle of continuity. His proposition, "Religion demands the complete unity of life,"[61] stood directly opposed to both. Life, he wrote,

> . . . should be completely controlled by Jesus' principle of love to God and man, and that one should see and feel that this principle gives to life its meaning and value. . . . Religion reaches out to everything, and down to the bottom of everything; it includes our whole mental equipment and activity, whether of thought, of emotion, or of will.[62]

Any delay in serious attention to the religious nurture of the individual until adolescence--a delay which Coe believed both Hall and Ames' theories encouraged--led to a weakened religious education program in the church. Saltatory developmental theories resulted in desultory educational practice while continuity of religious development led, on the other hand, to the possibility of predicting the normal development of children and youth and gaining control over the process.

At this point, however, Coe was caught in a contradiction. While he affirmed the continuity of religious growth insisting that any difference between religious awareness and response in children and adults was the result only of a limited range of experience, firmness of habit, and extent of forethought, he nevertheless insisted that child life is qualitatively not only quantitatively different from adult life. He accepted the key principle of modern educational thought that the child is a distinct person with a mental and emotional life of his own, not, as the usual antithesis had it, "a miniature adult." But while he recognized the credulity of children's belief, their random association in religion as in all their thought, and the imitative origin of all their religious acts, he rejected the interpretation that the religion of the child was so distinct from "the religion of a mature mind" that the chasm between them required a development leap.[63] Rather than "a leap of faith" Coe stressed the normal, continuous development in children of a capacity for responsiveness to religion. He interpreted Jesus' saying that children are close to the Kingdom of God in such a way as to gain his authority for the negation of the necessity of conversion. He quoted approvingly Horace Bushnell, who, a half-century earlier, sought to substitute for the revivalist tradition with its emphasis upon conversion taking place at a specific point in time, a program of life-long nurture. He endorsed Bushnell's recommendation that the child is to grow up a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise.

It should be noted that Coe adduced no data to confirm or deny that sudden leaps may mark the progress of the religious life; he gradually but decisively discounted the possibility of saltatory development chiefly because it was in conflict with the underlying premise of his total outlook, the principle of continuity.

Coe's culminating work in the psychology of religion was issued as one of the University of Chicago Publications in Religious Education.[64] It appeared the year before the United States entered World War I and, although echoes of the war are audible in the book, it reflected an experience largely untouched by the war's trauma.

The book's dedication, a moving tribute to the still fresh memory of Sadie, summarized Coe's intent to discover the possibility of religion within the natural conditions of human life. His affirmation in the dedication that religion, if it is possible, is necessary reversed James' argument in "The Will to Believe" that belief because it is necessary, is possible. James' argument was unacceptable to Coe for whom only a religion established within the limits of what he considered to be scientific reason could claim the allegiance of "a mature mind."

In his Preface he clearly restated the personalistic emphasis of his earlier books that religion was of central importance to human life, but his emphasis upon the distinctiveness of Christianity was more muted. In 1902 he wrote that Christianity was being simplified, intensified, and socialized. Now he focused his interest on the function of religion to clarify, intensify, and socialize human desire generally. His partiality--or what he even more negatively suggested was his "caution" toward the content of the Christian religion in which he was raised--was sustained largely because

> Within the historical movement broadly called the Christian religion the human spirit has come to demand more of life than it has elsewhere, that is, that in this religion we have the greatest of all stimuli.[65]

Building on Edward L. Thorndike's psychology, William McDougall's social psychology, Edward S. Ames' functional definition of religion and Emile Durkheim's insight that religion originates in social experience, Coe fashioned his own psychological interpretation of religion.[66] It was an interpretation avowedly free of all dogma and all authoritatively imposed norms, except perhaps one. Immediately following his statement in his Preface that no experience of his own or of anyone else's would be decisive for him, he confessed the decisiveness for his religious outlook of his college commitment to religion and science.

At a time when Max Weber was calling sombre attention to the progressive disenchantment (Entzauberung) in the world signaled by the "melancholy, long withdrawing roar" of the religious tide which once buoyed up man's spirit,[67] Coe was confident that intelligence itself would provide a sure basis for the religion of the future. He had, after all, experienced in his own life the transmutation of the religious obligation into the obligation to be intelligent. The youth who put aside the unfulfilled expectation of a sudden, shining religious conversion renewing him from without and took up the responsibility for intelligent, controlled direction of his own life was father to the man who wrote The Psychology of Religion. In this work which drew together the study and reflection of the years since

The Spiritual Life was published, he concluded that religion within the bounds of the new science of psychology was possible; he never doubted its necessity.

Recognizing that objectivity would only come into the study of psychology of religion as investigators adjusted their partial researches and judgments to the correction of other researchers with other perspectives, Coe explored in his Preface the close tie between his interpretation of the psychology of religion and his own religious experience. He affirmed first his personal belief in the importance and durability of religion in human life, an affirmation confirmed by his conclusion at the end of his study that religion was an aspect of life which humanity would never outgrow. If a full study of religion were possible, it would represent nothing less than a history of the evolution of human value itself. Religion was the sphere in which humanity symbolized its highest aspirations and the area in which an atmosphere of aspiration encouraged the on-going revaluation and transvaluation of desire or value. As he was to reaffirm more than a quarter of a century later in What Is Religion Doing to Our Consciences?, he maintained that the function of religion was nothing less than the fully ethical socialization of human desire.

He also expressed his belief in immortality as a consequence of his interpretation of the ethical in personal social terms. Only the imperishability of personality gave any significance to social life and maintained the moral imperative in the on-going life of the community. There were evocations of

Konigsberg and Boston, of Kant and Bowne in his thought at this point, but, typically, there was no explicit reference to these fathers of his thought.

The literature, so meager when The Spiritual Life was published, was now considerably expanded. Ten volumes in the psychology of religion had received wide academic recognition before 1916, among them volumes by Durkheim, Ames, and Wundt.[68] Coe described his own volume as a handbook for beginners, a guide which might serve to clarify problems, summarize available data, evaluate research methods, and present the achieved results of investigation to date. But his book was also his own original and lasting contribution to the psychological study of religion.[69]

The twentieth century born discipline of the psychology of religion was itself dependent upon another infant science, the new psychology, which Coe dated from the establishment by Wundt of the first laboratory for psychological research in 1875. Coe recommended that researchers in the psychology of religion develop methodology slowly; he criticized the notion that there was but one scientific method which needed only to be applied to different areas of research. "To be thoroughly empirical," he write, "implies that we look ever for that which cannot be experienced in the old categories."[70] He noted that every science has grown not only through the creation of a body of facts, but primarily through the development of fundamental conceptions which shaped a methodology capable of evaluating and classifying those facts. He argued vehemently for a methodology which would embrace all facts then known about the historical and psychological basis of religion but would not exhaust the potential of religion for present and future life by confining it within the categories of its original expression in primitive life. His concern at this point was strong enough to prompt him to make a rare negative references of Dewey. "The claim of Dewey that a thing is fully explained as soon as its genesis is described is true," he commented,

> . . . on condition that "genesis" is made sufficiently broad to cover the whole evolution of function, but if "genesis" refers merely to the earliest functions, and if genetic explanation, consists in classifying the later-developed functions under the earlier ones, then we have the kind of oversimplification that reveals similarities but conceals differences.[71]

Skeptical of the dangers of the genetic fallacy, Coe was also suspicious of attempts to define religion in terms of specific content. Among his arguments for eschewing substantive definitions were the fluid character of religious content itself; the existence of Buddhism which lacked even the minimal content of a god-idea; and his general opposition to an intellectualist position which assumes that religious ideas are self-sustaining logical entities independent of impulse and action. Coe also questioned, however, the usefulness of definitions which reduced religion to feeling such as Schleiermacher's definition of religion as the consciousness of absolute dependence. He believed such subjectivistic definitions were insufficient to explain the full impact of religion on human culture. He suggested that what researchers in the psychology of religion needed was not so much a definition which would convey knowledge as one which would assist in the organization of the knowledge about religion accumulated by anthropology, history, sociology, and psychology. He proposed a functional definition of religion to provide just such assistance.[72]

In 1910, Irving King and Edward S. Ames, two associates of Coe in the early days of the Religious Education Association, published studies in religion which laid the foundations for a social psychological approach to religion drawing largely upon anthropological data.[73] Two years later Emile Durkheim carried the identification of religion with social values to its utmost limit in his thesis that the origin of the god-idea was to be found in society itself. It was Durkheim's conclusion that the "elementary forms of the religious life" traced to their origin merge in totemism, in which the god of the clan can be nothing else than the clan itself.

Coe's study of the psychology of religion revealed both his creative contribution to this growing body of knowledge and the consistency with which he maintained the positions laid down in his 1908 essays. Expressive of his originality was the balance he struck between Durkheim's thesis that the god-idea in primitive culture evolved out of the experienced values of the clan and his own emphasis that in advanced stages of culture religion functions in such a way as to remake society according to values not yet experienced. Partially reversing Durkheim,

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Coe asserted that it is the ideational function of religion which leads to the discovery of the ethical meaning of society. His 1908 position that no specific religious value existed permitted him to develop in a most radical way the functionalism first outlined in James R. Angell's Psychology (1904) and most systematically applied to the psychology of religion by Ames in 1910.[74]

Coe differed from Ames, King, and Durkheim, however, in that he did not identify religion with social values, or any other particular values intellectual, aesthetic, moral, or economic. He built upon Harald Høffding's definition of religion as the conservation of value and went beyond it in his insistence that it was the function of religion so to criticize, refine, and unify values that they became transformed into still higher values.

Coe thus combined a modification of Høffding's definition of religion as valuational process with the functionalism of the new psychology to create an enduring methodological approach to the scientific study of religion. As one of Coe's colleagues noted in 1952, scientific study has not progressed beyond Coe's 1916 insight that the most fruitful definition of religion was one which focused attention on the consequences, intended or unintended, which flowed from its functioning within society.[75] Coe's insistence that religion is a process working in and through all our values--"the desire within desire itself," as he phrased it--has stood the test of half a century. Y. Milton Yinger, in his recent volume The Scientific Study of

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Religion, concluded that religion is best studied in its wide ranging interrelationships if it is interpreted as a process working toward integration within the symbols of the culture, the institutions of society, and the structure of character itself.[76] Coe's The Psychology of Religion was just such a comprehensive study of the functioning of religion.

Coe defined the term "function" as

> . . . the part that any organ or process has in maintaining, reproducing, or improving the life of an individual or of the group to which an individual belongs.[77]

While biologists might deliberately avoid all teleological implications in their use of the concept of function, Coe argued that psychology has to recognize ends as objective facts since "mind as we know it best" prefers something, seeks something, and experiences success or failure in the process. Mind is conative or goal-seeking in all its functioning. Functional psychology, therefore, cannot avoid teleological implications because it is the study of a process which defines its own ends. Coe further urged the recognition in functional psychology of teleological implications in the widest cosmic sense. The development of theology and philosophy was a witness to the way mind functioned to seek out the meaning and value of life in a superindividual and consumnatory sense. Thus he argued that function would also be defined with reference "to the advantage or value toward which the process . . . moves."[78] He sought to ground the human naturalness of religion upon this dynamic thrust of mind after value.[79]

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Coe identified several difficulties in the way of a fully developed functional approach to the psychology of religion. Chief among these was an inadequate recognition even among functionalists like Ames that the fully conscious self was a proper focus of study. Despite William James' conclusion that "there are not states of consciousness as such," Ames, following James R. Angell, atomized consciousness into discrete states such as sense-perception, memory, emotion, and then searched for the analogous relationship between these states and the structure of the brain and the nervous system. Coe believed that this structural-functional approach obscured the distinctive contribution which evolution made to the study of mind. While contemporary psychology was rightly suspicious of concepts such as "the soul" or "personality," it should not ignore the advantage which evolution gave when it stimulated psychologists to interpret mind as a favorable variation contributing to the total well-being of the individual and the species. Coe argued that the functioning of the fully developed mind in the reciprocal adjustment of the individual to the environment and the environment to the individual would constitute psychology *par excellence*. He believed that the organization of psychological knowledge around the theoretical construct of personal selfhood would prove as fruitful in uncovering fresh problems and integrating acquired knowledge as had behaviorism when it developed an operational model completely bypassing consciousness. Such a psychology of selves was essential

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to Coe's purpose for he could establish the naturalness of religion as a quest for value only if he could bring the conative quality of mind within the purview of scientific psychology.[80]

Secondly, while he himself drew upon the theory of instincts, he recognized traditional instinct theory as an obstacle to a fully developed functional psychology. In A Social Theory of Religious Education, he enumerated twelve instincts describing them as "fixed, hereditary, and fundamental to the development of character,"[81] but in The Psychology of Religion, published the year before A Social Theory, his ambivalence toward the validity of instinct theory is clearly evident. In both books he stated his belief that there was no religious instinct as such, but he was unable to abandon the argument that religion originated in the social tendencies surrounding nutrition and reproduction. The argument seemed to fascinate him as being the strongest one he could muster in defense of his claim that religion arose out of the human condition itself.[82] However, even in those portions of his writing where he gave the widest recognition to the theory of instincts, Coe resisted the interpretation of G. Stanley Hall, among others, that instincts limited the present options in human conduct so that, for example, the instinct for pugnacity makes war inevitable. He did participate, however, in Hall's celebration of the instinctive as the controlling base of all cultural institutions to the extent that he regarded the instincts as "a coefficient not only of rudimentary mind, but also of the highest self-consciousness."[83]

In The Psychology of Religion Coe tended to contract all instincts into two: nutrition and reproduction. He argued that these two alone provided a sufficient base for the grounding of the valuation process in original human nature. Because instincts are not unequivocal in their expression, he believed these two were capable of sustaining the highest as well as the basest values. He declared that consciousness itself acts upon instinctual activity in such a way as to transform it, commenting that the appetite made discriminatory by mind moves as much away from as toward food or sex. He suggested that the labor movement itself illustrates how an instinctive need for food when socially shared

> . . . awakens, sooner or later, a consciousness of the social values broadly called cultural, and these it is that define the specifically mental destination of function.[84]

Similarly, he wrote that the compassion integral to all advanced religious expression was an outgrowth of "the parental regard" rooted in the sex instinct.[85] Down to the 1930's in his popular writings he continued to suggest that the human naturalness of religion was based upon instinctive tendencies; however, only in a 1915 journal article did he explore in detail the possibility of basing the valuation process solely on what Thorndike called "the original tendencies of the original tendencies" and rejecting all specific instincts.[86]

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Coe began his discussion in this article by listing various approaches then being taken by functionalists in psychology. One stressed the general purposive character of mind without any further specification. Another asserted that nutrition and reproduction were the two functions which underlay all mental and cultural activity. A third, pioneered by James R. Angell, sought to identify the function of each item in a structural classification of mind.[87] This approach was congenial to Coe, who, however questioned Angell's focus upon the earliest mental reactions, the terminus a quo, since he argued that critical attention should be focused upon the terminus ad quem. Characteristically, Coe wanted to adopt a method which would preserve for study the terminal meaning of the whole phenomenon of mind.

A fourth approach started from the assumption that mental functions have their root in instinctive satisfactions: "an inventory of instincts would be ipso facto a list of functions of mind" according to this view. This approach required a focus upon the original nature of man and his unlearned tendencies to react in specific ways. But its key difficulty for Coe was that it focused upon the part of human nature that is disclosed antecedently to all culture, or, as he phrased it, "before the mind has performed some of its most characteristic acts."[88] Its attractiveness was its harmony with what Coe rightly perceived was a growing consensus within psychology to discard traditional instinct theory completely. Coe wrote that as psychological knowledge expanded lists of instincts contracted.

Edward L. Thorndike's latest works postulated numberless narrow adjustment acts rather than a specified list of instincts. Coe quoted Thorndike's conclusion that, for example, reaching "is not a single instinct, but includes at least three somewhat different responses to three very different situations."[89] The thoroughness of Thorndike's analysis revealed tendencies which Coe listed as follows:

> a tendency to be or become conscious; a tendency toward love of sensory life for its own sake; a tendency to prefer experiences in which there is mental control; a tendency toward a capacity for learning.[90]

These "original tendencies of the original tendencies" indicated to Coe that instincts did not bind humankind to a particular sensitivity or response. Rather they gave the power "to organize or do something with our sensitivities."[91]

A fifth approach sought a classification of mental functions based on a study of value formation. W. M. Urban's[92] study of the general direction of the mind toward value in 1909, and H. L. Hollingworth's[93] empirical studies of preferences in 1913 suggested to Coe that objective criteria for the study of value formation might be forthcoming. He argued that what psychology needed in order to be fully scientific was a combination of Angell's structural-functionalism, Thorndike's concept of "the original tendencies of the original tendencies;" and Urban's value studies which indicated mind's direction from something to something. He was aware that any attempt to bring value preferences within the orbit of psychological study could be misconstrued as a cover for the imposition of a priori norms upon scientific study. To offset this possible charge he cautioned, "The work of functional psychology is not to tell us what we ought to prefer, but to determine as a matter of observable fact what mind does actually go toward and 'for.'"[94]

Coe next sketched briefly a model he saw emerging from the convergence of the work of Angell, Thorndike, and Urban. He listed first the biological functions of the mind growing out of Thorndike's research. The development of the original tendencies according to Thorndike led to a quantitative increase in response to the range of objects in space, in time, in magnitude, and in quality. Coe matched these biological functions with what he called "the preferential functions of mind." The preferential functions listed by Coe were the tendencies to find satisfaction in

1. consciousness itself;
2. the multiplication of objects of consciousness; (Thorndike's "love of the sensory for its own sake);
3. control of objects, one's self included;
4. the unification of objects, one's self included;
5. communication;
6. contemplation.[95]

Coe argued that all ethical, noetic, religious, and economic values could be subsumed under a category of the social. He suggested that the most general category for the social was communication since the social dimension of value was present in every act of communicating preferences to others. He interpreted contemplation as the taking of satisfaction in the mere presence of objects "without regard for anything further that may happen to or with them."[96] He noted that play was omitted from his list but he believed that the satisfaction to be found in play was a complex of the satisfactions under 1, 2, and 3, and sometimes all six. He believed that the ethical function could be accounted for under the processes of control, unification, and communication. Truth, he wrote, was "analyzable without remainder into functions four and five," while economic value "is exhausted in the notion of control within a social medium."[97] He omitted religion because it is not coordinate with other interests, but is rather "a movement of reinforcement, unification, and revaluation of values as a whole, particularly in social terms."[98] As he wrote in another context, religion

> . . . has no springs other than the impulse to live, to live well, to live a diversified yet organized life, and especially to live socially.[99]

Although his methodological approach had changed, the conclusion of this article is in entire agreement with the argument he advanced eight years before in "Religious Value." Whereas in 1908 he wrote as a philosopher, in 1916 he wrote as a psychologist. But however much he shifted his disciplinary focus he did not alter his belief that the religious inheres in any and all values.

As Coe developed his functional interpretation of religion he gave special attention to the personal self, a concept of immeasurable importance to him and one which symbolized the continuity of his thought with his original personalism. While never discounting the knowledge or the insights coming from scientific methodologies which bypassed the problem of the fully conscious self, he argued throughout his Psychology of Religion that personal selfhood should be utilized as a theoretical model in psychological research alongside other models. He did not, however, believe his emphasis upon personal reals was in any way incompatible with a social psychological emphasis upon the self as a complementary concept arising out of the concept of "the other." He readily incorporated into his thought the intimate coincidence of the "I" and the "thou" demonstrated by genetic psychology.[100] Indeed, personalism's method of reconciling opposites such as the self and the other by referring to their mutuality in consciousness prepared him for any easy assimilation of William McDougall's social psychology. His versatile use of the concept of the social self can be illustrated by digressing slightly to describe his concept of adjustment in functional psychology.

Adjustment was a core issue for Coe since he recognized that adjustment might be narrowly interpreted as a one way adjustment of the organism to the environment. In his concept of adjustment he explicitly rejected any Spencerian connotation that the self must be adjusted to natural laws or conditions of development independent of the mind's control. He argued that persons are rarely alone with nature in a situation which is completely culture free. "Mind," he wrote, "is already bound up in what we call the external world."[101] Hence most of the objects encountered by persons are not merely physical, they are psychial: they represent objects touched and transformed by the minds of others. He declared that the concept of a one way adjustment between mind and environment in the present stage of human development was both harmful and useless. He noted that even when a person was completely alone in a wilderness environment he adjusted to that environment through utilization of concepts or tools inherited from other minds.

Just as he argued that persons only perceive nature through the filter of culture, so, too, for Coe, individuality was also a cultural artifact. The self is not given but arises in consciousness as the reciprocal aspect of some experiences of the other. "Myself" and "other selves" are both in the process of becoming persons in the act of social adjustment; both are mutually modified for the purposes of some common ideal. At one point Coe listed eight different philosophic responses to the question, Why do I know minds exist?[102] He noted that all of them began from the false premise that the conception of individual mind is antecedent to the conception of other minds. He believed he avoided this difficulty when he blended his personalism with the assertion of social psychologists that it is the awareness of others which leads to the differentiation of the self. "Social communion," he wrote, "is the very experience that gives 'me' any meaning at all."[103]

While thus receptive to the interpretation of the social sources of the self, Coe was wary of Freudian or other interpretations which identified the source of the self in the unconscious mind. He gave only prefunctory attention to the theory that religion arose out of primordal fears coded into the unconscious. He was, he wrote, "amazed" at those theologians who preferred to seek the origin of religion in the unconscious where mind is in closest continuity with nature rather than in social interaction where individual mind reveals its continuity with other minds.[104]

Coe believed that "the new individualism"[105] which rooted personal consciousness in social consciousness gave a sound psychological base on which to build a social interpretation of religion. But he also resisted a general tendency reflected in Ames' Psychology to permit religion to deliquesce into the merely social. Not a value, not an instinct, not an unconscious reflection of primordal fear, religion, was also, for Coe, not social consciousness as such. It is important now to focus upon Coe's attempt to retain both the human naturalness of religion and religion's capacity to transcend the human condition.

Coe's belief that genetic psychology made it possible to study the mind as a process of value clarification is the key to his thinking on this point. He argued initially that human desires are of such a quality that they are not extinguished once satisfaction is attained. Further, human desires press for organization as a unity within the individual in whom they are objectified as character. Human desires also undergo a process of social organization toward unity which finds objectification in the institutions of society. Thus in Coe's thought individuality has a social origin in two senses: first, in the basal sense that the recognition of the self arises in consciousness as a reflection of the other; and, secondly, in the sense that the self is deliberately and formally shaped by the dominant institutions reflecting social desires. If the process were left at this point, clearly social desires would be paramount. But Coe maintained that human desire

> . . . growing by what it feeds upon, refining itself, judging itself, organizing itself, becomes also desire for the conservation of the human-desire-and-satisfaction type of experience . . . we desire to endow our values with the added value of time-defiance.[106]

What, he questioned, should be the name for this "desire within desire?" At this point Coe became lyrical noting that when we revalue the seeing of the eye, art is born; when we reflect on persons meeting persons, morals emerge; when we search for the norms of thought, noetic values are created. Similarly when we revalue the values that express the wholeness of life, religion becomes manifest. Any reaction, he wrote,

> . . . may then be considered as religious to the extent that it seeks "life" in the sense of completion, unification and conservation of values--any values whatever. Religion does not introduce any new value, it is an operation upon or within all our appreciations.[107]

Religion is not any particular value; not even the reflection of "the highest social values" as Ames suggested; but it functions through the revaluation of value to point toward the realization of personal and social selves. For Coe, the source of the transcendent in religion is the push toward consistency which is immanent within desire itself and leads finally to the unification of social and personal value. When ethical value attempts its own ideal completion in union with all other values similarly ideal and complete, wrote Coe, we have religion functioning to transvalue value itself. Coe's discussion of the transcendent in religion permits us to observe "the mature mind" no longer so much delineating an approach to religion as recreating religion in its own image. It should be noted that Coe would not have considered the preceding comment a criticism; rather, his writings suggest that he would have valued it as an illustration of his claim that the history of religion is a reflection of the evolution of the mind itself toward value.

Coe's functionalism, reinterpreting the meaning of religion, enabled him also to rework radically the meaning of prayer and the belief in immortality. It is in his two chapters dealing with these themes, however, that his tendency to pointificate becomes especially irksome. Typical of his reductionism in these chapters is his statement that if religion is the focalizing of life's values, prayer is the vocalizing of life's desires. Writing that "we may be sure from our whole study of religious evolution that every religion is social," he continued that in the Christian religion

> . . . with its central emphasis upon love, prayer tends to become, wherever the constructive significance of love has not been submerged by ritualism or dogmatism, the affirmation of what may be called social universalisms of an essentially democratic tendency.[108]

And he concluded even more baldly: "the function of prayer is that of training men in the attitudes of mind that are fundamental to democratic society."[109]

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In his discussion of "the future life as a psychological problem," Coe, after noting the origin in ghost fear of the belief in an after-life, argued that the discovery of persons puts survival into new perspective. "Death," he wrote,

> . . . now appears to be an interrupter, if not destroyer, of what is most sacred. Consequently, directly out of the appreciation of personality, and without dependence upon antecedent spiritualistic beliefs, or upon the doctrine of retribution, there arises a question whether or not death is simply defeat, as it seems to be, or whether it can somehow be fitted into the system of personal-social values.[110]

Among the many responses to the question of death, Coe noted that some respond simply by pointing to the goodness of present life; some seek scientific measures for the prolongation of physical life; others attach enduring worth to the nation or to some ideal of progress; and, lastly, there are those who transform the old symbols of heaven and hell "into an entirely different faith . . . in the continuity of personal-social values."[111] Coe identified his own response with that of this last group.

While commending the work of the Society for Psychial Research with which William James was so prominently identified, Coe urged "orthodox psychologists" not to turn aside from the hard work of finding methods by which to study the possibilities of a continuance of personal selfhood after death. He argued, too, that there was a need for an investigation of how the desire for immortality functioned to enhance social feeling in the present. No one not familiar with the memorial he wrote for Sadie Knowland Coe could guess at the personal emotion flowing beneath the desiccant prose in which he recommended scientific study of the desire for immortality to determine if it functioned to enlarge and sanctify present social life.

In several chapters,[112] Coe surveyed the way religion functioned in society to generate institutional forms and to shape the character of both religious leaders and the great mass of believers. Although he noted that the emergence of new institutional forms and characterological types do not displace earlier ones, and, indeed, in present society they exist side by side, he nevertheless maintained that the types represented stages in the evolutionary development of religion. The late appearing developments were in each case better adapted than earlier ones to bring values to expression in the individual and society.

He identified first three stages of institutional or group conduct in religion. The religious crowd, led by suggestion which either controlled or realeased inhibitions, was, he wrote, to be found "in some revival services of the present day among both whites and blacks"[113] as well as in the medieval "dancing manias" and in primitive religion generally. The earliest religion expressions were, he wrote, "undoubtedly" of this excited, unreflective type. The religious crowd meets the gregarious needs of its members and releases them from the monotony of their lives. It is an institutional expression of group conduct which permits indulgence of the sexual instinct and the aggressive instinct; but it also contributes to the beginnings of social cooperation. Emerging when religion is still inchoate in a group, the social and ethical values of the religious crowd are only rudimentary.

The sacredotal group, bound together by authority, represents another stage of institutional development. Tribal religions and all churches "that endeavor to enforce as final a particular form of worship, or of ecclesiastical government, or of doctrine"[114] are examples of the sacredotal group type. The sacredotal group controls its members through suggestion supplemented by formal training of the young.

The last and highest stage of the development of religious group life appears with the emergence of the deliberative group. This group adopts procedures designed to prevent the force of suggestion swaying its members and to heighten the process of reflection among them. The deliberative group permits its members to engage in criticism of its goals and thus provides for the critical reconstruction of its own values. Every element in the service of worship of groups of this type enhances the individuality of the worshipper.

These three institutional expressions of group conduct also shape their adherents into identifiable character types. The religious crowd produces the impulsive individual controlled by suggestion; the sacredotal group produces the regulated individual controlled by ritual; and the deliberative group produces the emancipated individual who discovers his own identity in deliberative social action.

The stage of religious expression in any society also shapes the characteristics of the religious leader. The three stages of religious group conduct bring into prominence successively the shaman, the priest, and the prophet. The shaman, while a psychic who retains his place by the impressiveness of trance and trance-like behavior, is not a mere charlatan, however, for he achieves a certain amount of wisdom and influence from his habitual dealing with public events. By regulating the rites of the group, the priest, on the other hand, conserves by institutional means what the shaman maintains largely by psychial powers. The priestly leader accustoms his followers to the regulation of law; his coming signifies the ascendancy of patterns of consistency, logic, and precedent in the thought of the group.

The most illustrious example of a people moving from priesthood to the highest level of religious leadership, prophecy, is ancient Israel. Coe noted that modern biblical criticism has made the process of prophetic development in Israel completely accessible to study. The Old Testament, itself, documents the origin of the prophet from within a shamanistic tradition in which the prophet was considered "the mouthpiece of Y(a)whe." As prophecy developed, however, true prophets were distinguished from the false by the content of their message and not by psychial means of any kind. The central message of the great writing prophets of Israel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, was that God spoke in and through contemporary social and ethical events. Quoting the cry of Amos uttered in the name of Y(a)whe, "Let judgment roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream," Coe wrote,

> Here at last is religious leadership that, conceiving God predominantly as ethical will, regards ethical conduct as the service of God and the prophet's own ethical fervor as divine inspiration.[115]

With the ascendancy of prophecy in Israel the highest stage of religious leadership was attained. The prophetic leader in his enunciation of God as ethical love undergirds a broad and intense sociality while also contributing to the development of individualism of a high order because he proclaims persons as the objects of divine love.

Throughout his discussion of institutional and character types, Coe seems to be more under the sway of what he himself might call the bad habit of a philosopher in the idealist tradition to project spaceless, timeless forms than under the sway of inductive science. The strong bias toward the more characteristically Protestant expression of group conduct is especially evident; but even more disturbing is the fact that not even Coe's usual evenhandedness can mask the complacency of these chapters. Unable to break loose from the power of the evolutionary principle, Coe identified Protestant liberalism with the apex of religious development. Certainly he was not original in this conceit; Eliot, for one, clearly did the same in his 1909 address. But since Coe drew the analogy at greater length and in the context of a scientific study of religion perhaps he incurs the greater blame for what might be called flagrant religiocentrism.

It is almost impossible to make an evaluation of Coe's Psychology of Religion which does full justice to its originality and its derivativeness, to its intellectual honesty and its sometimes arrogant simplifications, to its piety toward the divine and its denial of all the attributes of the divine. The book at times can be dizzying with its reductionist definitions which suggest a form of socio-religio "double-think." Some examples, all taken from one chapter, will suggest the flavor of much of the book:

> Mind is discovery.
> Religion is realization.
> Knowledge is cooperation.
> Love is the desire for justice.
> Justice is the finality of persons.
> Religion is the discovery of persons.
> Religion is a law of mental development.[116]

Yet his faults, stylistic and substantive, recede before the solid achievement of the work as a whole. His radical insight, his unswerving consistency, his concern for the good of all, his trust in the unity of life, his faith in the method of intelligence and his search for a religion possible within the science of psychology as he knew it then are qualities which give the book distinction and integrity. Twenty-eight years later John Dewey pointed to the durability of the religious, proclaimed there is no specific religious value, and described the religious as the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive social ends.[117] But such statements were long familiar to the by then nearly third generation of religious educators who were trained by teachers who themselves sat at the feet of Coe.

Like St. Thomas, Coe attempted a new synthesis. He desired to integrate the knowledge coming from the new history,

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the new psychology, the new sociology, the new education, and the new theology. In his own generation he witnessed scholars in all the social sciences finding in the discovery of society a new focus and direction for their work.[118] He believed that the new logic of psychology permitted him to analyze the way mind itself discovered society, the self, and the values in them. Only as persons opened up to the dimensions of the social would they be able to see reality and at the heart of that reality they would find themselves as reals. The valuational process finally led to the discovery of the individual self as the carrier of ultimate meaning. He taught that religion was the progression of the mind itself toward this discovery of the real. Religion had no other process than the social immediacy within which consciousness of the self and the other arose. It had no other content than the discovery of the reality of personal selfhood in society. Society fully realized was democracy; and the democracy in which all persons were valued as ends was nothing less than "the democracy of God."[119]

Coe believed that religion was not moving away from anthropomorphism. In one of his statements--which reveals also his gift for reversing commonplace judgments--he declared that religion has never been anthropomorphic. Only when the religious function permits the full recognition of social value will the worth of persons be discovered. Only when the "thou" is known will the "I" fully emerge. And only when persons know how to cherish and value the personal will they perceive its features in the divine visage itself. God made in our image is the end of religious development, not the beginning.[120] The discovery of what the human image is will itself be the end toward which the valuational process leads. "We are discovering ourselves," he wrote,

> . . . through the reintegration of our wants, scientific and other, in terms of personal-social self realization. And this is religion. Religion refuses to take human nature as a static datum eternally resistant to social ideals, but insists upon the possibility of fundamental changes, and sets us the task of building a new race, a regenerate race.[121]

Tertullian, an early Christian apologist, wrote that "the soul was naturally Christian" in order to legitimate the claim of the new faith to the allegiance of all.[122] In much the same spirit, Coe declared the self to be naturally religious and sought the legitimacy of science for his soul's desire.

CHAPTER IV FOOTNOTES

1. Coe's articles emphasizing communication in friendship as crucial to an understanding of reality are "On Having Friends: A Study of Social Values," Journal of Philosophy (March 1915), 155-161, and "A Proposed Classification of Mental Functions," Psychological Review (March 1915): 87-98.

2. Commenting on Dewey's Experience and Nature, Holmes wrote, "So methought God would have spoken had He been inarticulate but keenly desirous to tell you how it was." Quoted in "The Classic Period in American Philosophy" by Max H. Fisch in a volume edited by Fisch, Classic American Philosophy: Peirce, James, Royce, Santayana, Dewey, Whitehead (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), p. 8.

3. Riley Herman Pittman, "The Meaning of Salvation in the Thought of George Albert Coe, William Clayton Bower and George Herbert Betts" (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate School of Religion, University of Southern California, 1946), concluded that Coe in his early works used the concept "conversion" critically. In A Psychology of Religion (1916) he used it to signify "self realization within a social medium" and in later works the term was practically swallowed up in Coe's concept of growth, p. 141.

4. Quoted by Jacques Barzun in his Foreword to the Mentor edition of James' Varieties (New York: The New American Library, 1958) p. v. Chautauqua was widely noted for its "healthy fun, wholesome recreation, religious reverence, good taste and honest inquiry" according to Gould, The Chautauqua Movement, p. 10.

5. Peter T. Forsythe, "The Distinctive Thing in Christian Experience," Hibbert Journal VI (1908): 481-499.

6. William Clayton Bower, one of the giants in the religious education movement and for a long time professor of psychology and religious education at the University of Chicago, wrote of Coe's intellectual consistency in his article, "Contributions to the Psychology of Religion," Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 67-70. The whole issue was a memorial to Coe's leadership in the religious education movement.

7. In A Social Theory of Religious Education (1917) Coe became almost rhapsodic when he described the joys of a good marriage. Conjugal love, he wrote, was "the purest and most elevated self-consciousness." Quote in text is from the same page, p. 94.

8. Dedication, The Spiritual Life.

9. Privately printed, Coe dedicated this volume to "the friends of the inner circle" who knew her best. Coe gave his wife's music library and a gift of money to the Evanston Public Library to establish the Sadie Knowland Coe Music Room; bookplates in the donated volumes bear her photograph: a handsome, strong woman of great dignity, she does not look pretty in any conventional sense. The collection is now part of the Art, Music, and Film Collection in the library. A letter of consolation from his mother, dated August 25, 1905, is in the Coe collection at the Yale Divinity School Library. His mother urged him to accept his loss as within a pattern of divine providence and to rejoice that he had "such a noble woman" as a companion for seventeen years.

10. Woodie in preparing his study, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation," benefited from the personal reminiscences of Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May, both of whom worked with Coe. May contributed the anecdote about the portrait; Woodie commented that "possibly because of a decision in favor of her career, the Coes had no children," pp. 53-56.

11. Coe, Sadie Knowland Coe, p. 91.

12. Ibid.

13. Coe explored this theme in chapter 7, "Realistic View of Death," in Religious Realism, edited by Macintosh and "Euthanasia? The Issue's Core," in Churchman (February 15, 1951): 12-13, and reprinted in Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 168-169.

14. Coe dedicated The Psychology of Religion "To a very human person/ to know you/ is to behold the splendor of life/ and its mystery/ To know you/ is to discover that religious faith/ if it is possible/ is necessary/ How can I know you/ and still be without religious faith? Therefore to you/ I dedicate this study of the human naturalness of religion."

15. The Council, composed of the most eminent persons associated with the R. E. A., developed policy for the organization. In 1923 Coe led a successful fight against the retention of the Council asserting that it was an aristocratic body, see Theodore G. Soares, "The History of the Religious Education Association," Religious Education XXIII (1928): 621-633, p. 627. See Religious Education Association, Proceedings for the Year 1909, for details of the program.

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16. Letter of Dean Holgate, dated December 9, 1939, in Coe's file in the archives collection, Northwestern University.

17. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, pp. 774-777, discussed "the varieties of religious liberalism" and the openness of various Protestant denominations to liberal influences. Herbert W. Schneider, A History of American Philosophy, p. 401, noted that Bowne's personalist emphasis was influential in "breaking down the sectarian intellectual barriers of the Methodist Church" and making it more responsive to liberalism. S. Paul Schilling traced Methodism's liberal social legacy in Methodism and Society in Theological Perspective (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), vol. 2 in a four volume series under the general title, Methodism and Society and edited by the Board of Social and Economic Relations of the Methodist Church.

18. The Reverend L. J. Holmes' tract was published by H. C. Paddlock and Sons, Palatine, Illinois, in 1902.

19. The Illinois Writers' Project, while preparing a history of civil liberty in Illinois, investigated the circumstances surrounding Coe's resignation. Coe's file in the archives collection at Northwestern University has copies of correspondence between Marion Knoblauch, the Project editor, and Dr. Holgate, Dean Emeritus of Northwestern, reviewing Coe's resignation and honorary professorship. Knoblauch followed up this correspondence with a letter to Coe. On June 1, 1940, he replied, "My resignation from the faculty of Northwestern University was not in any degree whatever related to any administrative pressure with respect to either my teachings in the University or my public utterances in print and on the platform. Certain Chicago newspapers printed some sensational surmises or prophecies as to what was about to happen, but it never happened, and I ended my career at Northwestern in the utmost good feeling." This must be accepted as the authoritative "last word" on the issue, but it goes against the tenor of Coe's general comments from time to time, most prominently in "My Own Little Theatre," and in the Preface to What is Religion Doing to Our Consciences (1940) that he suffered harrassment because of his views. In his article, "The Assault Upon Liberalism," Religious Education XXXIV (April-June 1939): 85-92, Coe reviewed the witness of professors who lost their positions because of their commitment to objective research in religion. Speaking of his college professor of biology, Harrison Webster, he wrote: "He was wary, but never did he compromise, qualify, or omit anything, that he regarded as the truth about evolution." Perhaps the evidence of the whole suggests that Coe also was "wary" at the points where his teaching conflicted with established prejudice.

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20. Excerpts from Briggs' address are included in Smith, _et al._, eds., _American Christianity_, II, pp. 276-279. Max Gray Rogers surveyed the Briggs' case and the seminary response in "Charles Augustus Briggs: Heresy at Union," in Shriver, ed., _American Religious Heretics_, pp. 89-147. Coe's ability to fall back upon pious rhetoric in difficult places is nowhere better illustrated than in his closing words of an article he wrote supporting his old seminary professor, H. G. Mitchell, dropped from Boston University in 1905 for his critical historical approach to the Old Testament. Recommending that the bishops reverse their decision, he concluded, "But if they should not do so, still, under God's guidance, the slow process of history will prune the branch that bears fruit and take away the branch that bears it not," "A Crisis in Methodism," _The Outlook_ LXXXI (December 16, 1905): 933-935.

21. Shriver, _American Religious Heretics_, p. 111.

22. Ahlstrom, _A Religious History of the American People_, pp. 814-815. Jane Dewey, in her biography of her father, recorded that John Dewey enjoyed "stimulating interaction" with many on the Union faculty after his move to Columbia. She specifically named McGiffert as someone whose friendship Dewey valued. The biography opens Paul Schilpp, ed., _The Philosophy of John Dewey_, p. 38.

23. Ahlstrom, _A Religious History of the American People_, pp. 814 and 844.

24. Excerpts are in Smith, _et al._, eds., _American Christianity_ II, pp. 233-238. Published as American Unitarian Tract 246 in Boston in 1909, the address was originally delivered at the Harvard Summer School of Theology.

25. The satirist, Finley Peter Dunne, created "Mr. Dooley" as a mouthpiece for his tart reflections on his time. Of the coincidence of Eliot's retirement, his speech on the new religion and his editorship of the Harvard Classics, Mr. Dooley said, "President Eliot has entered the university of the world and like any freshman he must tell people what books they must read and invent a new religion." Quoted by Henry James, _Charles W. Eliot: President of Harvard, 1869-1909_ (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930), vol. 2, p. 201.

26. Smith, _et al._, _American Christianity_, II, pp. 237-238.

27. _Ibid._, p. 235.

28. The Federation for Social Service was organized by socially concerned members of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) in 1907. In 1908, it was fully recognized by the General Conference of the church and its Social Creed adopted and placed in the _Discipline_ of the Methodist Church. The Social

Creed so well expressed the social aspirations of leaders among the mainline Protestant denominations that it became the basis for the first American Protestant cooperative body, the Federal Council of Churches, organized in 1908, see Charles Howard Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism: 1865-1915 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), pp. 280-301. For the subsequent history of the Social Gospel movement and the Federal Council of Churches, see Paul A. Carter, The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel: Social and Political Liberalism in American Protestant Churches, 1920-1940 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954); Harry F. Ward, "We Were Friends," Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 88-91 noted that Coe left one-quarter of his estate to the still active Federation when he died in 1952.

29. The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1908 (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1908), p. 479 ff., reprinted in Cameron, Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective, pp. 323-324.

30. Cameron, Methodism and Society, p. 324.

31. A good study of the first phase of the social movement in Christianity is James Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America (New York, 1936). The works of a Congregational minister, Washington Gladden, were very influential in the movement; among them are Who Wrote the Bible (1891), How Much is Left of the Old Doctrines (1899), Social Salvation (1902), and Present Day Theology (1913). The definitive historical study of the social message of Christianity throughout the centuries is Ernst Troeltsch's The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, trans. by Olive Wyon (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1931). See also Robert T. Handy, The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920: Gladden, Ely, Rauschenbusch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966). It is significant that Handy linked the name of the American economist, Richard T. Ely, who did so much to popularize the new historical-ethical approach to economics and discredit the older, "classical" laissez-faire views, with the names of the two great social gospel theologians. See Wellman J. Warner, The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967; first published in 1930) for a study of the openness of Methodism to social concerns. Both Troeltsch and Warner were directly influenced by Max Weber's 1904-1905 essays in Religionssoziologie, translated by Talcott Parsons under the title, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1930), although they emphasized not so much the compatibility of Protestantism to capitalism as the sources of prophetic protest against capitalism within the Christian tradition.

32. Rauschenbusch began Christianity and the Social Crisis with the question, "What light can we get on the troubles of the great capitalistic republic of the West from men who tended sheep in Judea or meddled in the petty politics of the Semetic tribes?" and then proceeded to give his answer in over four hundred pages. In 1912 Rauschenbusch published Christianizing the Social Order and in 1917 his last book, A Theology for the Social Gospel. See also Chap. 12, "Walter Rauschenbusch Formulates the Social Gospel," in Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel.

33. North's hymn appears in the hymnals of nearly every major Protestant denomination in America today. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, included the full text of the hymn on p. 202.

34. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, described the institutional expressions of the new social interpretation of Christianity in Chap. 17, "Social Christianity Becomes Official." In 1901 the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church created a standing commission to deal with the relations of capital and labor at the prompting of a group of socialist clergymen organized as the Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labor. The Presbyterians, early in the century, established the Department of Church and Labor in the Board of Home Missions. Other major denominations followed suit and by 1919 the Roman Catholic Church developed "the Bishops' Program" and the National Catholic Welfare Conference to promote better social and industrial relations, see Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 1005.

35. The phrase is Ahlstrom's in A Religious History of the American People, p. 804. In 1909, Rauschenbusch published For God and the People: Prayers for the Social Awakening (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1909) with such titles as "for children who work," "for women who toil," "for workingmen," and a section devoted to "prayers of wrath" against war and mammon. Hofstadter in Social Darwinism in American Thought, Chap. 6, "The Dissenters," emphasized the important contribution of the Social Gospel movement to the diminution of the strength of the laissez-faire sentiment and the rise of a new public willing to support reformatory and regulatory legislation. He concluded: "To the growing solidaristic trend in American thought the social gospel contributed heavily, for its lectures were heard by thousands, its books read by hundreds of thousands, and incalculable numbers joined its organizations or attended its earnest conferences," p. 110.

36. Soares, "The History of the R. E. A." The full title of Peabody's book is Jesus Christ and the Social Question: An Examination of the Teaching of Jesus in its Relation to Some of the Problems of Modern Social Life (New York: Macmillan Co., 1901).

37. Most of the details of the Union School of Religion are taken from an interview with a teacher who worked with Frank McMurray initially and later with Coe, "Sophia Lyon Fahs is 95: An Interview with a Pioneer Religious Educator," The Religious Educator I (September 1971): 4-5.

38. This is the burden of Coe's A Social Theory of Religious Education.

39. J. F. Herbart (1776-1841) succeeded Kant as professor of philosophy at the University of Knoisberg. His commitment to a scientific analysis of education gave pedagogy a new status as a field for university study. The Herbartian movement was much stimulated when the University of Jena established a pedagogical seminary and a practice school on Herbartian principles in 1874. In America the National Herbartian Society was founded in 1892 (becoming the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education in 1902). Herbart's The Science of Education, translated by H. M. Felkin and Emmie Felkin (Boston: Heath, 1893) and his Letters and Lectures on Education, translated by H. M. Felkin and Emmie Felkin (Syracuse, New York: Bardeen, 1898) undergirded the new professional training of American teachers at the turn of the century. Chapter 10, "Instruction as Construction: Herbart," in Harry S. Broudy and John R. Palmer, Exemplars of Teaching Method (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1965) outlines Herbart's educational philosophy and places him in historical perspective.

40. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, pp. 168-176.

41. First published in The School Journal LV (1897): 77-80, "My Pedagogic Creed," was reprinted together with the next of a speech given by the University of Chicago sociologist, Albion W. Small, to the N.E.A., "The Demands of Sociology Upon Pedagogy" (Chicago: A. Flanagan Co., n.d.). Quote is from p. 5 of the pamphlet edition.

42. Ibid., p. 17.

43. Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 17.

44. Annual Bulletins of Northwestern University for the years from 1892 to 1909 are available in the Archives Collection of the University.

45. Bulletin of Northwestern, 1909-1910.

46. Bulletin of Northwestern, 1904-1905. Coe delivered a series of public lectures the previous Spring on the same topic. The lectures were designed for pastors, church school superintendents and public school principals. The syllabus developed for the series is in the Coe file in the archives collection at Northwestern. Education in Religion and Morals, published in the fall of 1904, follows closely the organizational design of the lecture series. Coe required this book as the text for his course for the next four years at Northwestern.

47. Bulletin of Northwestern, 1909-1910.

48. "Sophia Lyon Fahs is 95," pp. 4-5.

49. Ibid.

50. In 1912 Coe published his only work dealing directly with the practice of teaching in religious education, The Core of Good Teaching: A Sunday School Curriculum (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912).

51. He discussed the priority of practice over theory in his introductory section to Part V of A Social Theory of Religious Education.

52. See above, Chapter III, p. 100-101, and The Spiritual Life, pp. 39-47.

53. Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, n. 1, p. 255. In his note on p. 254, he cited as his authority for postulating continuity of religious growth an 1897 study given far less prominence when he cited it originally in The Spiritual Life, p. 40.

54. Coe discussed Herbart's contribution to religious education in A Social Theory of Religious Education (1917), pp. 151-153; Motives of Men (1928), pp. 97-100; and What is Christian Education? (1929), pp. 54 f.

55. Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, pp. 2-13.

56. Ellwood Patterson Cubberley, Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History, rev. and enlg. (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1962; originally published in 1910), pp. 454-455.

57. John Dewey, "Interpretation of the Culture-Epoch Theory," Second Yearbook of the Herbart Society, Chas. A. McMurray, ed., Publications of the National Herbart Society (1895-1900), pp. 89-95.

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58. Hugh Hartshorne in a letter to Woodie wrote that the Union School of Religion moved away from Herbart's influence as Coe saw how his philosophy failed to give scope to the child's ability to solve problems as well as assimilate ideas. Woodie, "George A. Coe's Concept of Valuation," p. 42, n. 57.

59. In 1918 Ames published *The New Orthodoxy*, which was a signal that "the New Theology" outlined by Theodore Munger in his 1883 book, *The Freedom of Faith*, was now becoming normative.

60. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, pp. 182-183.

61. Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, p. 209.

62. *Ibid*.

63. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 148.

64. A series under the editorship of Shailer Mathews, Theodore G. Soares, and William Clayton Bower, all of whom were prominent in religious education. They attended the first R. E. A. conference in 1903 and remained active in the organization. Mathews wrote *The Social Teaching of Jesus: An Essay in Christian Sociology* (New York: Macmillan, 1897), one of the earlier social interpretations of Christianity.

65. Preface, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. xiii.

66. The alphabetical bibliography and topical bibliography in *The Psychology of Religion* are the most extended Coe appended to any of his books. He listed Ames' "Theology from the Standpoint of Functional Psychology," *American Journal of Theology* X (1906): 219-232, as well as his *Psychology of Religious Experience* (Boston, 1910); Durkheim's *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuese* (Paris, 1912); William McDougall's *Introduction to Social Psychology* (Boston, 1909); and Thorndike's *Educational Psychology* (New York, 1903), as well as vol. 1, *The Original Nature of Man* in his 1913 edition of *Educational Psychology* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University).

67. The phrase is from Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach," published in 1867.

68. Coe noted particularly that Wundt, in *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie* (Leipzig, 1913), p. 369, maintained that religion "in the only true sense of the word," is born with the rise of the god-idea, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 61, n. 1.

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69. Bower, "Contributions to the Psychology of Religion," pp. 67-70, and Bremer, "George Albert Coe's Contribution to the Psychology of Religion," pp. 277-286.

70. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, p. 14.

71. Ibid., p. 25, n. 1.

72. Ibid., Chap. 4, "Preliminary Analysis of Religious Consciousness."

73. Coe reviewed Irving King's The Development of Religion (New York, 1910) in Harvard Theological Review (July, 1910). He also reviewed Ames' The Psychology of Religious Experience in American Journal of Theology (April 1911).

74. Ames wrote the article on "Psychology of Religion" in Paul Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education V (1913), pp. 407-416. Douglas Clyde Macintosh, who studied with Coe at Northwestern in 1907, wrote that Coe came to an acceptance of functionalism in psychology gradually. Somewhat skeptical of functionalism in a seminar he taught in 1907, his 1911 review of Ames' Psychology of Religious Experience was very favorable. "I think," wrote Macintosh, "that from the year 1911, or thereabout, Prof. Coe came much more fully than before under the influence of the essentially positivistic school of Dewey and that as a consequence he was turned more or less against the theological interpretation of religious experience," "Prof. Coe and an Empirical Theology," Methodist Quarterly Review LXXVI (April 1927): 202-218, p. 204. This study suggests, however, that the development of Coe's thought followed its own inner logic as early as his 1899 study on "A Study in the Dynamics of Personal Religion."

75. Bower, "Contributions to Psychology of Religion," pp. 67-70.

76. J. Milton Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion (New York: Macmillan Co., 1970) discussed the functional definition of religion, pp. 5-16.

77. Coe, Psychology of Religion, p. 21.

78. Ibid., p. 23.

79. Ibid., Chapter 19, "The Religious Nature of Man."

80. Ibid., Chap 2, "The Psychology of Mental Mechanisms and the Psychology of Persons."

81. Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 135.

82. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, Chap. 19; Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education, pp. 122-123.

83. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, p. 24.

84. Ibid., p. 37.

85. Ibid., pp. 11 f, 24, 94, 162 f, 164, 236 f, 293, 299 f.

86. Coe, "A Proposed Classification of Mental Functions," in Psychological Review XXII (1915): 89-98, and reprinted as an Appendix to Chap. 2 of The Psychology of Religion, pp. 32-42.

87. James R. Angell, "The Relation of Structural and Functional Psychology to Philosophy," Philosophical Review XII (1903): 243-271; Angell's Psychology appeared in 1904.

88. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, p. 34.

89. Ibid., quoting Edward L. Thorndike, The Original Nature of Man, p. 198.

90. Coe, The Psychology of Religion, p. 40.

91. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

92. W. M. Urban, Valuation: Its Nature and Laws (London, 1909).

93. H. L. Hollingworth, "Experimental Studies in Judgment," Archives of Psychology (New York, 1913), pp. 118f.

94. Coe, Psychology of Religion, p. 35.

95. Ibid., p. 40.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid., p. 106.

100. Ibid., Chap. 10, "Religion as Social Immediacy."

101. Ibid., p. 26.

102. Ibid., p. 255, n. 1. In this note Coe condensed his argument in "On Having Friends: A Study of Social Values," The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Method (March 18, 1915) and reprinted in Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 142-145.

103. Coe, Psychology of Religion, p. 198. "My self consciousness," he wrote, "is all one with consciousness of others like myself--my self consciousness is social consciousness," p. 252.

104. Ibid., p. 208, n. 1. Coe discussed this in "Religion and the Subconscious," American Journal of Theology XII (1909): 337-349.

105. Dewey summed up the meaning of the new social psychological self in his Individualism: Old and New (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1929).

106. Coe, Psychology of Religion, p. 68.

107. Ibid., p. 41.

108. Ibid., p. 319.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid., p. 288.

111. Ibid., p. 289.

112. Chapter 8, "Religion as Group Conduct," chapter 9, "Religion as Individual Conduct," chapter 11, "Mental Traits of Religious Leaders."

113. Ibid., p. 120.

114. Ibid., p. 126.

115. Ibid., p. 183.

116. Chapter 14, "Religion as Discovery."

117. John Dewey, A Common Faith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934).

118. C. Wright Mills, Sociology and Pragmatism: The Higher Learning in America, ed. and with an introduction by Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Paine Whitman Publishing Co., 1964), reviewed the impact of the new social sciences on the thinking of Coe's generation. The American Historical Association was founded in 1884; the American Economic Association, 1885; the American Psychological Association, 1901; the American Sociological Society, 1905; and the American Political Science Association, 1906.

119. "The conclusion," wrote Coe, "is that social valuation is of itself recognition of the real; that the evolution of social

valuations is a progressive discovery of persons as reals; that intense valuation of persons, when it becomes reflective, tends to define itself in terms of a cosmic reality that has social character," Psychology of Religion, p. 245.

120. Ibid., p. 238.

121. Ibid., p. 241.

122. Ibid., p. 3; Coe cited The Apology and Testimony of the Soul by Tertullian (c. 155-222).

CHAPTER V

A SOCIAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Harrison S. Elliott, one of the foremost leaders of the second generation of religious educators, entered Union as a student in the fall of 1909.[1] He wrote that "it seemed as if the kingdom was coming speedily"[2] so expectant was the mood of the Social Gospel circle there. The Social Creed of the Churches which called for "the mind of Christ" to be recognized as "the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social sins" carried within it an echo of the perfectionism and millennial expectation of the Nazarite groups of Coe's boyhood. If the Social Gospel adherents did not speak of the Grand Sabbatical Year that captured the immagination of the Genesee Valley enthusiasts, they could and did confidently describe their own century as "the Christian century."[3] Although liberal in the sense that they responded fully to the claims which modern science, scholarship and industrialism placed upon the religious life, many Social Gospel leaders revealed a deep piety which testified to their roots in an earlier Protestant evangelicalism. The evangelical emphasis upon the centrality of an experienced faith is evident in the writings of a theologian like Walter Rauschenbusch; it especially shines through his "prayers for the social awakening."[4] Later, we will see, too, how central to Coe's educational thought was the evangelical emphasis upon a personal experience of faith.

The war did not immediately dispel the optimism and confidence of the pre-war years. Elliott even noted that the Great War "increased rather than dampened the ardor" of those caught up in the social interpretation of Christianity.[5] It is difficult today to understand, far less justify, the alacrity with which many in the movement "presented arms" in defense of the Allied cause. Shailer Mathews wrote that the aims of the war as outlined by President Wilson were "an international extension of the Social Gospel."[6] Walter Scott Athearn in Religious Education and American Democracy lauded President Wilson's aim of making the world safe for democracy and sought to show how democracy might be further undergirded by intelligence and godliness.[7]

But for many others who had been caught up in the Social Gospel movement, the war was a decisive event which destroyed not only their ebuillent hopes but also something deeper, their inner capacity to be confident of the direction of social life. Walter Rauschenbusch experienced the war not only as the negation of his generous social hopes, but as a negation of personal certainties and attitudes as well. Summing up the impact of the war upon his life, he wrote simply: "I do not expect to be happy again."[8] But in 1917 Coe was far nearer in mood to Elliott than to Rauschenbusch. The war was not for him the death knell of liberal hopes. His most influential work, A Social Theory of Religious Education, was completed and already in the hands of the printer when the United States declared war on Germany. In this seminal work Coe built a fully developed religious pedagogy upon the foundation of his earlier evangelicalism, his merger of personalist and pragmatic elements into "a faith philosophy," his psychology of religion, and the social interpretation of Christianity. _A Social Theory_ not only was a full statement of his belief in the inevitability of "the divine human industrial democracy," it was his most extended exposition of the educational principles and practices which would express the reality of such a democracy in the present. America's formal entry into the war caused him to make only minor additions to his text before publication; the fact of the war did not lead him immediately to any fundamentally new insights or to a new social orientation.[9]

Thus at first the war was not the searing personal experience for Coe that it was for many of his generation. Although there was much of the social prophet about Coe, typically he was silent when a decisive event was taking place. He lacked the characteristic ability of the prophet to point to a critical event as it was taking place and identify it as a harbinger of judgment or promise. The style of his religious radicalism was that of the far seeing intellectual, not a prophet. Unlike the prophet who views all things _sub specie aeternitatis_, Coe looked at life _sub specie cogitationis_. Such slow and deliberate response to social events was perhaps inevitable in a writer who sought an intellectual understanding of life, who resisted pluralism, avoided paradoxes, and uniformly translated religious symbols into social-ethical meanings.

In The Psychology of Religion, Coe analyzed the hysteria which accompanied the outbreak of the war in Europe with detachment. "The present European war," he wrote, "furnishes excellent illustrations of the intensification and unification of the valuational phase of consciousness." He noted that the individual and his nation became unified by focusing upon a single theme. "This intensification of experience," he continued

> is perceived as a religious phenomenon. The churches of England, France and Germany are full with worshippers convinced that God is on their side . . . a sense of obligation, postponement of self-regard, submission to discipline, self sacrifice and the glow of a good conscience are the accompaniments of the war effort and they give the religious quality to the citizenry which all comment upon.[10]

A year later in A Social Theory of Religious Education, Coe endorsed the war policy of President Wilson. War, he wrote, is the imposition of one national will upon another. Since the United States disavowed any national self seeking in going to war, this definition made it possible for him to accept the entrance of America into World War I on Woodrow Wilson's terms. America, he wrote, was not even engaged in war, but in a police action. Quoting President Wilson's statement, "we have no selfish ends to serve," he was satisfied that there was no discontinuity between his ideal and America's action.[11]

"You've changed so," says one of the characters in Kurt Vonnegut's Mother Night and receives the reply: "People should be changed by world wars else what are world wars for?"[12] In time the war wrought a change in Coe, too. In 1919 he wrote an emotional article in which he focused upon the religious education of boys who may die in some new war, asking "In the name of God, in the name of humanity, beloved by God, what are you teaching these boys?"[13] By 1924, he was asking

> . . . suppose that all children of the country were to be so trained . . . that, a generation hence, the American mind should have a deep revulsion against the inhumanity of war, an intelligent realization of the futility of it, and at least a rudimentary understanding of the causes of international strains . . .?[14]

In 1928 he wrote that the hardest battles fought during the war were those precipitated in the minds of men. The heaviest cost of the war was not in the physical devastation, the dead and the maimed, but in the lives of its "living victims." By then the last vestiges of idealism about the war had disappeared from his writing; he focused his attention upon the debilitating impact of the war on "the mild, cosmopolitan humanitarianism" which had grown up in the nineteenth century.[15] In the 1930's and 40's Coe was a leader among a small group who were seeking to remove national guard units from high schools and college campuses. He was far ahead of his time in his insistence that military training at educational institutions accustoms the young to the possibility of war and that military etiquette itself is destructive of the manners appropriate to a democracy.[16] By then, too, Coe was arguing that the struggle for full democracy was a struggle within a system which maintained itself by force. "Every relation of man to man that makes international war the ethical monstrosity that it is," he wrote, "is involved in even the 'peace time' institutions of capitalism."[17]

A significant figure binding together Coe's years at Northwestern, his immersion in the Social Gospel movement at Union and his later Marxism was Harry F. Ward. Ward studied philosophy with Coe at Northwestern and graded papers for him in Logic. After graduation, he became so involved in a Chicago settlement house program sponsored by Northwestern students and faculty that he turned down the offer of a graduate assistantship under Coe. For several years he served a small Methodist church in a largely immigrant community behind the Chicago stockyards, finally leaving the parish ministry to do graduate work at Boston University. After his move to Union, Coe was successful in getting his former student an appointment to the Union faculty. Sometime during the next few years Ward and Coe reversed their roles of student and teacher; Ward became the teacher and Coe the willing student as they explored together the social dimensions of Christianity. Ward wrote the first draft of the Social Creed of the Churches and worked with Frank Mason North to guide it through to adoption by the General Conference of the Methodist Church in 1908. Later, when thirty three denominations organized themselves into the first national interdenominational agency in the United States, the Federal Council of Churches, they adopted the Creed as an expression of their social concerns and the tasks to which they were called.[18]

Millennialist and pietist echoes are very strong in Ward's early writing. Even the very title of his 1915 volume is suggestive of his outlook. He wrote in Social Evangelism:

> His Kingdom is to come on earth by intensive conquest--by the power of a love, mighty to save the whole of life, a transforming leaven able to reach the heart of society as well as of men, to capture its motives and motor powers. This was the purpose of Jesus, and his followers must consciously undertake the task of realizing his vision.[19]

At Union Coe encountered the evangelical call to perfection which he had heard as a Methodist youth, but now with a subtly new twist. As he had already come to accept the definition of religion as the transformation of values into ever higher and more inclusive values, he was ready to hear the message that the Christian gospel must be judged on the basis of its contribution to enhancing social life. Even as the highest social values were religious, so religious values could not be other than ones which gave the greatest stimulus to maximizing social good. If Coe did not want to identify the religious with the social per se--the error which he believed Durkheim and Ames made--he sought to distinguish them because he believed it was the quality of religious value that it pointed beyond already experienced value. Religion was not only "the conservation of value," but the "transvaluation of value." Here at this point in Coe's thought a transcendent note was struck which many religious conservatives who became his chief critics in the 1940's overlooked.[20]

Ward and Coe maintained a long friendship as they grew old together and progressively more radical. Their naivité in their later Marxist period is all too apparent now, although, as a correspondent expressed it to Coe in 1943, the position of Ward and Coe gave many liberals within the Protestant church a place to stand which was not preempted by the pope, Stalin or Reinhold Niebuhr.[21] It is not often that a teacher dedicates a book to a former student, but Coe dedicated A Social Theory of Religious Education to Harry F. Ward who, he wrote, "sees and makes others see."

It is now almost fifty years since Coe published A Social Theory but as a clear statement of how the church in the process of transmitting its faith could engage in a progressive reconstruction of its life it has not been surpassed. Like Dewey's Democracy and Education,[22] A Social Theory of Religion Education, simply by avoiding the contemporary event of the war and focusing upon long maturating themes in education, achieved a timeless, classic quality. The themes of a whole generation of educational theorists are present in the work and Coe can take for granted an audience already receptive to the most general definition of education. Education is conscious evolution,[23] he wrote; or, alternatively, education is applied psychology.[24] Knowing his earlier commitment to the scientific study of religion and his rejection of mysticism as a source of knowledge, we are prepared for the sweeping statement that religion is knowledge and it has social consequences. He analyzed the doctrine that religion cannot be taught but must be caught in a process of personal interaction and, from the perspective of his characteristically socratic position that virtue is a way of knowing, he dismissed it.[25] Whatever is of most value in religion can

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be taught, just as it can be known, analyzed, studied and reproduced by intelligent effort. His definition of religion as rooted in social reality at the point where value becomes central is a compact statement arising from his psychology of religion;[26] and, so, too, is his assertion that "god in the past was incompletely socialized."[27] But what was new was the vigor and the simplicity with which he identified the process of religious education with democracy. The Social Gospel movement possessed a social creed, a statement of "social salvation," and "social evangelism"; now Coe supplied it with "a social theory" of religious nurture. "The mission of Christian education," he wrote, "is that it can add the very heart and character of God to the process of democratization."[28]

Since Coe affirmed that educational theory grows out of practice and is tested by the changes which it introduces into practice, he devoted a major portion of A Social Theory to an examination of existing educational practices and tendencies within the churches. He divided American religious traditions into five dominant types: the Roman Catholic, the dogmatic Protestant, the ritualistic Protestant, the evangelical Protestant, and the liberal Protestant. Concerned to locate the sources of a social theory of religious education within existing practices and tendencies, he evaluated the social consequences of the religious education typical of each of these church types.[29] Let us go "into the ecclesiastical furnace, then," he wrote ". . . seeking there for facts that illustrate, either by similarity or by contrast, tendencies toward a social view of religious education."[30]

Beginning with Catholic practice in education, he wrote "No other church holds with such unanimity a definite, logically articulated theory of religious education, nor exhibits greater consistency in practice."[31] He identified the following characteristics of Catholic education:

1. education is the transmission of a completed faith, not participation in the evolution of a faith;[32]
2. the processes of intelligence are not employed primarily for defining an experience or a purpose that the pupil already has or is in process of forming, but for defining something entirely antecedent to such experience and purpose, and intended as a control thereof.[33]
3. the power of authority in the Roman Catholic Church is lodged in men and descends in orderly graduation from the pope to every priest.

These presuppositions led Coe to declare that the purpose of Catholic education is "to perpetuate and make universal an autocratic government of religious and ethical thinking and of religious and moral conduct."[34] He concluded that this "is the very antipodes of the aspiration for a democracy of God."[35]

The bias against Catholicism present in The Psychology of Religion is clearly evident throughout his discussion of Catholic education in A Social Theory. Although as noted below, he pointed to positive features of instruction in Protestant churches of a dogmatic and ritualistic type, he made no favorable judgment upon the consequences of an emphasis upon dogma and ritual in the Roman Catholic tradition.

The affinity of dogmatic Protestantism with Catholicism he readily admitted. Protestant education, he wrote, is

> dogmatic when it is controlled by these presuppositions; that there is a finite, historical organ that exercises divine authority upon earth; that this authority imposes upon man a changeless faith which it is the function of religious education to transmit; and that education transmits it primarily in the form of certain propositions.[36]

But, while education in dogmatic Protestantism is similar to Catholic educational practice at the point where it emphasizes intellectual content over experience, the centrality of the Bible rather than the priest gives greater flexibility to even the dogmatic Protestant type and turns the students toward a literature which, because it grew out of life and is a record of that life, has many liberating features. Those Catholics who contrast the teaching of the catechism with the teaching of the Bible do not exaggerate the difference. The Bible, wrote Coe, is

> educationally as different from catechism as the affection of a mother toward her baby is different from the law of the state that forbids a mother to let her offspring starve.[37]

He emphasized that even dogmatic Protestantism puts a premium on religious experience which draws the believer into a relationship with God, a relationship "that can easily take a democratic form."[38] Rather than preparing a child to analyze social issues and work cooperatively to remove them, dogmatic Protestantism, however, tends to cause the pupil to become orthodox by a process of habituation which isolates the religious response from other aspects of life and even isolates the believer from other believers. Exclusive reliance upon the scriptures leads a child to too great familiarity with

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pre-democratic social conditions and ideals. "If now," he wrote

> the curriculum takes its instances of goodness from tribal relations, and from life under monarchial nationalism; if the virtues of the warrior are often to the fore, while the virtues of the free citizen have not as yet even dawned upon the horizon of the good man's hopes; if loving-kindness must still express itself almost exclusively in the narrower personal relations and in relief, while causes of wide-spread woe remain unguessed and unsought for; if social justice, though hot against those who profit by the exploitation of human beings, sees no way to endow the exploited with civil authority to control the conditions of the common life; if the democratic spirit, as far as it is present at all in individuals, finds no way to organize itself politically, or even to conceive of a civil state through which it could utter itself--if the curriculum has such a limited outlook upon Christian character, how can it present, without stammering and without ambiguity the fully Christian ideals of a democracy of God?[39]

Turning next to ritualistic churches within Protestantism, such as the Protestant Episcopal Church, Coe noted some social advantages arising from their characteristic educational emphasis:

1. the church building, its furnishings and the service itself are the focus of instruction and these are objects and events which the child can experience for himself immediately and concretely. "Here is the font at which he was baptized, for example. It becomes, in due time, a means of teaching him that he is a member of the church and a child of God. Here is the sanctuary that contains the cup out of which he will drink at his first communion; here is where the bishop will sit when he comes to confirm you";[40]
2. church music, stately hymns and the robes of the priest all appeal to a child's sensual nature. Coe also noted that children are "little ritualists by nature";[41] they delight in repetition;
3. at adolescence the young person is attracted to the symbols of the church, symbols which he often fills with his own inexpressible yearnings;

> 4. the fact that the child is already considered a member of a large and important group has direct educational benefit; it ties the child to the adult in a cooperative fellowship which has elements of true democracy.

The pitfalls of ritualism, however, are many. Teaching of the creeds and the ancient symbols is done by rote methods which destroy vitality. The education of a child in repeated acts of worship as the core of Christian practice provides for the perpetuation of the church, but not for the interaction of church and community; nor does it provide opportunity for studying the ways in which the church reconstructs the life of the community around it. In order to promote full participation in the democracy of God, "loyalty to the church," he wrote "must fuse . . . with loyalty of the church to the causes of social welfare, social justice and world society."[42]

Evangelical churches emphasize personal religion as the experience of reconciliation with God. Hence, he wrote, they take

> the standpoint of personal experience as distinguished from doctrinal correctness, from correct church relations, from ritualistic performances, and from correct acts or 'good works.'[43]

Coe believed that evangelicalism's insistence that all are sinners, that all are subject to the same divine condemnation, and that all must meet the same conditions of salvation had been and remained a profound social leveller. The evangelical gospel itself contains "a germ of religious democracy."[44] Moreover, he wrote

> the thought that each of us stands in direct, indefinitely modifiable relations with God, not merely in some fixed social status, has been an immeasurable inspiration to

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> self development. It has brought out the innate powers of multitudes of plain men. It has stimulated education. Long before our States reached a conviction that the public school system should reach all the way to the university, or even to the high school, ministers were successfully appealing to farmers, mechanics, and shop keepers to found and support academies and colleges and to send their sons thereto.[45]

Emphasis upon experience has created a spiritual democracy in the church, for it has permitted the lowliest person to speak authoritatively of the things which he has experienced; he does not need priest or minister to speak for him. The disadvantages of the evangelical position consist in its imposition of one uniform experience upon all who would enter the church; further, evangelicalism does not know what to do with the child still too young to enter into a reconciling experience with God. Coe argued that evangelicalism would have an ineffective and inconsistent approach to the religious life of the child until it perceived in the educational emphasis upon growth an emphasis compatible with its own understanding of experienced faith. Gradually, he wrote

> there is dawning a realization that our social experience is a sphere for communion with God, that here children can share religion with adults, and can grow in religion without any forcing whatever . . . This social experience of God in his world--God in all love, and in all that wins us to the love way--makes the love of the Father and the love of the neighbor one experience. This is a religion of the heart. It will tax all the emotional resources of evangelicalism. It will still single out each individual, and it will go on utilizing the values of mass suggestion. But it will not separate emotion from study or from action. And because it will maintain these three in vital unity, it will obliterate the gulf that has existed between child and man, between religious education and religious experience.[46]

Coe emphasized that in the reconciling process three parties are involved: "myself, my neighbor, and God."[47] Hence any inner rectification of the heart before God involves also the social act of reconciliation with the neighbor. Even the young child, too immature to understand the significance of the divine reconciling act, can enter into acts of reconciliation with other persons and can take some part, however modest, in the church's struggle to create a just society for all persons. Once it responded to the full educational meaning of its own distinctive message, Coe believed that evangelicalism could fuse religious experience with social action to create a consistent educational program of great power. Although Coe did not mention John Wesley in this passage, it is appropriate to remark that the genuis of Wesley's "method" lay precisely in this combination of religious experience and social reform.[48] Here again, as at so many points in his writing, reference to what would seem to be a key father figure was omitted.

Turning to liberalism last, Coe noted that its greatest legacy to religious education was its "attempt to incorporate freedom into religion."[49] Liberalism repudiated the authoritarianism which dogmatic, ritualistic and evangelical churches claimed in the name of the divine, recognizing, wrote Coe, that

> the demand for religious subjection has always presented itself as a command of God addressed to men, whereas it has always been a command of some men addressed to others in the name of God.[50]

If freedom within religion is the characteristic virtue of liberalism, Coe identified lack of zeal as its prime weakness. However, he emphasized that when liberals seek to express religious zeal, they have nothing they can substitute for "simple goodness," since they cannot hide behind dogmatic rigor or ritualistic worship. Liberalism's most important contribution to social theory in religious education is its clear witness that being religious is fundamentally a matter of right relations among persons. As he wrote in his 1908 paper, religious value is ethical and social values intensified and unified and pointing beyond themselves to new experiences of value. Liberalism was a living witness to this definition.

Coe observed that liberalism frequently fell into formal and intellectualist teaching methods, not unlike those found in dogmatic and ritualistic churches; and it failed to inspire ethical fervor to match that stirred up by the evangelical churches in their adherents. Further, since the liberal emphasis upon the freedom of the individual tends to deemphasize the church, liberalism loses the educational advantage of being able to point to an institutional embodiment of its own social purposes. Although often charged later by neo-orthodox critics with having an inadequate doctrine of the church,[51] Coe in this passage made it clear that he did value the social strengths and the fellowship which the church brought into the life of believers. Coe argued that only as liberalism aligned itself with the social teaching of the democracy of God would it be able to build an effective religious education program and avoid the dangers of excessive intellectualism and insufficient zeal.

Coe's discussion of the ~~dominant~~ typologies in religious education revealed a strong bias in favor of evangelicalism which at first may seem surprising, for his preference for the deliberative style in religion can easily create the image of him as a religious liberal in the rationalist tradition. Certainly much in The Spiritual Life leads one to the conclusion that he was hostile to the evangelistic style and there is much in his writing that characterizes him as a distant and aloof intellectual. But it seems to be equally true that the evangelicalism of his youth continued to influence the shape of his mature liberalism.

New England Puritanism modified by unitarianism and transformed by transcendentalism is the most frequently studied source of American religious liberalism.[52] Historians of education frequently use the spiritual biography of Horace Mann in order to show the coincidence of the wanning of Puritanism with its twin dogmas of depravity and determinism and the rise of a religious liberalism receptive to non-sectarian administration of the emerging public school.[53] Mann's pilgrimage follows the now almost classic pattern of liberal religious development standardized in American intellectual and social histories, for he was reared under the influence of New England Calvinism in its most rigorous post-Edwardsean form, became a Unitarian and then experienced a complete transformation of his religious outlook under the influence of transcendentalism. All three of these influences were highly rationalistic.[54]

Coe, however, was reared outside Calvinism in a tradition which specifically affirmed the freedom of the will and the possibility of being perfected in this life. His religious legacy was evangelical Methodism, strongly tinged with millennialism; it was "a religion of the heart" in which emotional certainties and personal experience were prized above rational certainties and correct dogma. Even after his Methodism was rationalized by Bowne's personalism and modified further by his commitment to modern science, especially the new science of psychology based on evolutionary naturalism, Coe never moved very far away from the evangelical claim that religion if it were to mean anything at all must be experienced. Although he consistently resisted the evangelical definition of experience as an instantaneous, emotionally decisive conversion, he retained experience as central in religious life. His faith philosophy reinforced by functionalism in psychology gave him the intellectual ground on which to stand as he defended experience in religion over against the religious rationalists, and as he defended the personal as the ontologically real over against the consistent naturalists. Moreover, Coe's literary style is always colored by the evangelical biblicism of his youth; the urgent tone of A Social Theory derived from that same heritage.

The implicit and explicit preference for evangelicism in A Social Theory gives greater meaning to Coe's statement in the Preface to The Spiritual Life that "evangelical Christianity is the essential germ of a future religious progress." There is an easy transition in his words of 1900 between "science of religion" and "future religious progress" which

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obscures the recognition that the tie between them is evangelicalism. By 1917 his bias toward evangelicalism was perhaps reinforced by the fervor of Ward's "social evangelism." His writings suggest that evangelicalism with its emphasis upon an experienced faith which links the will of God to personal and social life was always more attractive to him than the rationalist legacy of a liberalism descended from Puritanism. An indication of his indebtedness to evangelicalism is his statement that evangelicalism shorn of dogma and mysticism is religious education.[55]

We now need to refer briefly to the strands of Coe's thought which merge by 1917 to give a radical dimension to his understanding of religious education.

> First, a millennial hope in the transformation of the social order as this combined with the Methodist emphasis that believers could "be perfected in love";
>
> Second, the recovering of the social dimension of the Christian doctrine of atonement, salvation, grace and sin to the exclusion of nearly all mystical-individualist meaning;[56] Coe argued that to experience a personal sense of religious peace and not become engaged in social reconciliation was to pervert the central message of Jesus' teaching;
>
> Thirdly, his philosophical-psychological definition of religion as that which functions to enhance value;
>
> Fourthly, the personalist assumption that selves are reals and that ultimate reality is personal;
>
> Fifthly, his commitment to democracy as the political order that reflects the full recognition of personal selfhood.

Coe wove these various strands of thinking into one complex whole in A Social Theory of Religious Education. If he did not achieve a fully integrated synthesis, it must be remembered that he did not seek a logical consistency, but he sought a theory for religious education which would be adequate to the new demands growing up within the practice of education and within the experience of industrial democracy. While Coe acknowledged his indebtedness to Dewey for a clear exposition of democracy in education, their books were published too close in time for Coe to have based his social theory on Dewey, as one of Coe's most influential critics later claimed.[57] As this study has attempted to show, Coe's thought while reaching conclusions parallel to those of Dewey travelled its own road following independent guidelines in theology, philosophy and psychology. Significantly, too, Coe and Dewey differed in how they approached the task of relating traditional concepts to the new standard of democracy. Dewey used the dynamic concept of democracy to supplant all metaphysical conceptions in educational theory, while Coe transformed metaphysical concepts by pointing to their underlying social dimension.[58]

The power of Coe's 1917 classic derived from the singleness of his focus. All values whatever and even the nature of divine being are enlisted to sanctify democracy. But this is not to say that democracy as social value became a higher value for Coe than religious value. Such a relative ordering of values would be impossible to Coe because simply by definition religion is the highest expression of value. However, he argued that the social arrangements of political democracy were creating new behavior patterns leading to new insight into the good. In this sense democracy was the occasion for the revaluing of values; it performed a religious function. Coe recalled at this point Socrates' teaching that we do wrong because we do not know the right and contrasted it with Aristotle's observation that the practice of the good is the source of our understanding of what the good is. Psychology on the whole, observed Coe, justified Aristotle's position rather than Socrates's.[59] Coe claimed that our conception of what is natural and what ought to be all derive from our experience of the familiar. Since we learn to know God as we learn anything else we know--i.e., in and through our interaction with our social and physical environment--our conception of God will be modified as new sources of the good are opened up to us in democratic experience. Previously our concept of God was distorted because we were trained by prevailing social conditions to see him as a monarch or an autocrat; our new democratic practice gives fresh meaning to the Biblical insight that we are "co-workers" with him.[60] The appropriate symbol for the new understanding of God's relationship to persons is "the democracy of God."

In A Social Theory of Religious Education, Coe defined education in the broadest sense as taking place "wherever a plastic mind acquires a set of any kind."[61] Nature educates "through falls and bruises, obstacles and achievements."[62] Society, in turn, educates through many media: the sights and sounds of the street, newspapers, public amusements, political contests, business and social customs, waves of public opinion, home conditions--"indeed, the influence of every man and of every 'man way'" is educative.[63] Education "in the third and strictly technical sense" occurs whenever these natural and social influences "are controlled for the purpose of giving a set to young minds."[64] He focused attention on education in this third sense, but noted that

> Often, indeed, we shall find ourselves analyzing the unintended influence of men and women upon children, but always for the sake, ultimately, of more clearly defining our deliberate purposes.[65]

Coe recognized that the deliberate attempt to educate was made by many more institutions than the schools. The family, the churches, the public library, the playground movement, the juvenile law courts were some among the many institutions which gave a definite and deliberate "set" to young minds. He drew attention to the recognition growing in educational theory throughout the nineteenth century that "in a profound sense, the educator in all education is society."[66]

When once fully grasped, he argued that this understanding of the social source of all education invalidated the still widely held idealist conceptions of Pestalozzi and Froebel that education proceeds from within outward through the unfolding of powers innate within the child. While recognizing that society is dealing with unfolding powers or growth when it educates, he continued by noting that

> every child has many powers, better and worse. It is the essence of education to discriminate between them, and while promoting the growth of some, to prevent the growth of others. The same distinction has to be made when we meet the statement that the aim is to help

> children toward 'self-realization,' for behind this statement lies the unexpressed assumption that there are different sorts of self that an individual may become, and that education must give the advantage to some of these as against others.[67]

Critical of these key nineteenth century aims in education, he was skeptical, too, of then current educational aims expressed in the phrases "social adjustment" and "social efficiency." "The more democratically minded educators," he noted

> are coming to think of the future in terms of industrial democracy, an organization of producers governed by producers. Hence it comes to pass that progressive schoolmen are largely occupied at the present moment with problems of occupational training and vocational guidance.[68]

However, he argued that the aims of "adjustment" and "efficiency" were inadequate of themselves. Educators must ask: what are the social conditions to which the young are to be adjusted? In performing what social tasks should they gain efficiency? "Adjustment of a child to society," he wrote

> does not satisfy the educational conscience, or even the conscience of society in general. Our social conservatives themselves would condemn an educational system that sought to preserve our social organization unchanged. No; education selects some parts for preservation, while it condemns other parts, and toward still others is silent lest children should find out how bad we are. What a confession society makes in every school that it supports! It says, in substance: 'Here are a few things of permanent worth that we have already achieved; here, in addition, are our many unfilled aspirations, our unsolved problems. Try to be wiser and better than we have been.' Thus education is not only society's most supreme act of self-preservation; it is also society's most sincere judgment upon its own defects, and its supreme effort at self-improvement.[69]

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He concluded that the most fundamental aim of education is the reconstruction of society. Since all education is selective in the sense he outlined above, every act of deliberate instruction is a judgment upon what is of greater and what of lesser worth in society. In the very act of making such a judgment education aims at the progressive reconstruction of society. Just as the development of mind enabled society to take conscious direction of evolution, so the development of education enables society to take conscious direction of its social development.[70]

He argued that recognition of the social reconstructive process inherent in the educative process not only gives fresh meaning and dignity to schools, it transforms as well the meaning of childhood. If, under the influence of Pestalozzi and Froebel, teaching became "a prophetic office," Coe declared that

> none the less the child himself became 'a prophet of the soul.' To the reverence for their elders which had been demanded of children, the nineteenth century added reverence of adults for childhood itself. Every birth was a fresh incarnation of the ultimate meaning that pervades things.[71]

Progressive education in turn transformed idealist reverence for childhood into a recognition of the child's social function. Once modern society could no longer depend for its survival on the accumulated experience of its elders, but became dependent on the plasticity of its young, the school's role as the transmitter of culture was subordinated to its role as the progressive developer of culture. Since social preservation was now dependent upon society's ability to renew and reconstruct itself in and through the education of each new generation, the child became a resource of great social utility.[72]

Thus when Coe declared that the time was ripe for the church school to assume a progressive role within the educative process of the church he was sounding a radical note indeed. Actually the acceptance of the standard of the progressive school within church education was as powerful an attack upon the metaphysical culture of the church as, from a theoretical base, was Dewey's Education and Nature[73] published nearly a decade later. Perhaps the significance of Coe's acceptance of the progressive school as the appropriate standard in Christian education can be most vividly highlighted if we contrast it with the judgment upon the school of the twentieth century's most powerful voice for Christian orthodoxy, Karl Barth.[74]

Beginning in the eighteenth century, wrote Barth, the sense of conviction concerning educational aims, possibilities and achievements grew so strong that

> education progressively dared to esteem itself more and more independent of, and even superior to, the revealed gospel; felt superior to the Church. 'What is more exalted than the teacher?' At first for a long time humbly, but then with mounting self-assurance, and finally turning the tables and attempting to snatch the highest honor himself, the schoolmaster now steps up beside the parish priest as one who has something of his own, something special--something different and indeed much better--to say and offer to all the world: his immortal prototype, . . . J. B. Basedow, who not for nothing looked upon the doctrine of the Holy Trinity as his personal enemy.[75]

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Barth summarized the development of the school to its present pre-eminence among all educational institutions, nothing that first the church made room for the school, next to it, then began to regard the school with respect; and, he continued

> then began to look up to it even more respectfully before finally, conscious of its own superfluity, allowing itself to be completely merged with it, or alternatively itself becoming a school, just one more educational establishment among any others.[76]

Barth's indignation at what he regarded as the pretentious pride of those who would raise up a human institution to the level of a divinely endowed one stands in marked contrast to Coe's willingness as early as his 1902 essay on "Salvation by Education" to describe God's interaction with humanity as essentially educative.[77] Surely, as Coe might have put it, what a good teacher wants for his pupils indicates the direction of God's wants for us. A good teacher wants his pupils to grow, to take part in fresh discovery of meaning and even to create new meanings for himself and others. Why should the Master Teacher want less? As his exchanges with Reinhold Niebuhr and other neo-orthodox critics in the 1930's makes clear,[78] Coe was temperamentally unable to understand that from the point of view of his critics what God wanted was considerably more than any merely good teacher--however progressive--could ask, or even conceive.

Just as the conditions of industrial capitalism and political democracy were transforming traditional aims in general education, so, too, Coe argued that these social conditions were placing the social dimension of Christianity in high relief. Even as psychology was discovering the rootage of the self in the experience of the other, so, theology was discovering the reflection of God in the social experience of democracy. The new psychology, the new education, the new theology all demanded a new social theory of religious education. In response to the new individualism emerging from within the social science, Coe argued that any religious education must have a social dimension in order to be effective. But he was not, as critics later charged,[79] seeking to impose upon Christian education some standard which was alien to it. He emphasized that the social perspective was indigenous to Christianity. As the following statements--rather randomly selected from A Social Theory make clear--Coe believed that there was no break between inner, authentic Christianity and Christianity interpreted from a social perspective. Social Christianity was the inner core of Christianity.

> We shall overcome . . . only when, accepting in simple literalness our ancient doctrine that the supreme revelation of God is one with the supreme revelation of man, we teach the young that to know God we must be socially intelligent, that to make his will our own is a matter of social practice, and that entire consecration is a strictly vocational concept.[80]
>
> There can be no merely private relation to God, for our very selfhood is conjunct. We are made selves by give-and-take with others . . . and we are made in his image.[81]

Judged against the newly recovered social meaning of Christianity, he found the traditional aims of Christian education inadequate. He rejected the definition of religious education as instruction in doctrine since that presupposed that religion inhered in authoritative truths externally imposed on persons. He also rejected preparation for church membership as an adequate goal since it seemed to imply that God's will was done when persons entered a particular institution. The aim of saving souls was also a defective one in Coe's estimation because it led to an introspective and individualist piety which separated religious feeling from social responsibility. He also declared that any religious education which sought to provide opportunity for the unfolding of innate religious capacities apart from social and ethical experience was deficient. He wrote that even

> a glowing inner life of good will and tenderness and aspiration, a life that feeds daily upon the manna of religious history, is of itself no guarantee of the kind of intelligence that is necessary for the reconstruction of the world.[82]

There could be no true spirituality without the social dimension for, as he put it, "to know God, we must be socially intelligent." "The social tasks of the present," he wrote, "are the call of God."[83]

Coe proposed "the democracy of God" as the social standard which could best indicate the direction of Christian education. "Christian education," he wrote "is growth of the young toward and into mature and efficient devotion to the democracy of God and happy self-realization therein."[84]

Coe emphasized the significance of his employment of the term "growth." "The aim," he wrote

> is growth because there is now no separation between human society and divine, and because the rudimentary conditions of human society are already provided for in our social instincts.[85]

Here in his own words is a succinct summary of the theological and psychological presuppositions of his pedagogy.

However, while clarifying his use of growth, he did not clarify the distinction, if any, between "religious education" and "Christian education." Just as years before in Education in Religion and Morals he used "religious" and Christian" as practically convertible terms, so in A Social Theory he used "religious education" and "Christian education" indiscriminantly. It should be noted, however, that he specified "Christian education" in his definition of aim above. His discussion of the meaning of the phrase "democracy of God" clearly reveals, however, his conviction that the aim he proposed was rooted in the Christian tradition itself. "I use the term 'democracy of God,'" he wrote

> in place of 'kingdom of God,' not because I desire to substitute a new social principle for that which Jesus taught, but because the idea of democracy is essential to a full appreciation of his teaching. After making all needful allowances for the influence of contemporary political and religious conditions upon his modes of speech and the content of his thought--allowances that are to be determined by New Testament criticism--the fact remains that his desire for a brotherhood of men leads on with the inevitableness of fate to the ideal of a democratic organization of human society, and that his fusion of divine with human love presents us with a divine-human democracy as a final social ideal.
>
> Without doubt this view of the Christian life has been hastened by our experiments in popular government . . . A re-examination of prophetism, the teachings of Jesus included, has made it clear that thinking upon ethical problems, and upon the will of God, in terms of social causes and effects belongs within Christian teaching . . .

> . . . such questions as the following are becoming a prime concern of Christian thought: If one human life outweighs a world, as Jesus taught, what should we do with a social order that stunts multitudes of human lives for the sake of money, and does it, not by disobedience to the laws and courts? How can we really believe in human brotherhood if we are willing to acquiesce in a stratification of society into the servers and the served, the rulers and the ruled? Moreover, if brotherly love is, as our religion has always taught, the carrying out of the Father's loving will in human relations, how can the Father himself be willing to be an autocrat, an aristocrat, or a plutocrat? Must not Christians think of God as being within human society in the democratic manner of working, helping, sacrificing, persuading, co-operating, achieving? 'My Father worketh even until now, and I work.' Divine love, it appears, cannot realize itself anywhere but in a genuine industrial democracy.[86]

This representative passage indicates the way in which Coe wove together personalism, a historical Biblical perspective, sensitivity to industrial conditions and what Alfred Schweitzer once referred to as "piety toward Jesus" in a pattern which with only slight variation he reproduced in many books over the next quarter of a century.[87]

John Dewey in Democracy and Education referred in one passage to Aristotle's classification of women along with slaves and craftsmen as "inanimate instrumentalities of production and reproduction of the means for a free or rational life."[88] Throughout his discussion of the Aristotlean tradition, Dewey clearly implied that he rejected such a subordinate role for women, but nowhere in his comprehensive study did he explore the positive role appropriate for women in democracy, nor did he give specific attention to the family's role in enriching democratic society. In A Social Theory, Coe, however, did focus

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upon the family as a uniquely significant social and educational institution.

He recognized that all later learning is built upon "the substratum of social presuppositions and social attitudes"[89] which is laid in the mind of the child by his experiences within the family. "It is the fundamentals of social justice that are at stake in the child's experience in his father's family."[90] In the family, he wrote

> every member . . . is a . . . part of social processes. He is included within a network of concrete relations between persons--between the stronger and the weaker, between male and female, between buyer and seller, between the employer and the employed. . . . The child is not prepared to weigh these relations. . . . He may even accept injustice to himself as something that belongs within natural and proper social relations.[91]

The family is the institution which gives the earliest and most lasting "set" to the child's mind; it is the place where habit formation begins. The family is the determiner of the social attitudes and practices which the child will later regard as "natural." Even when grown, the child may be incapable of understanding the meaning of democratic government with defined civil liberties for all if within the family there was insufficient regard for the rights of each member. Thus the first step toward democratization of society must be taken within the family. Coe identified sex inequality within the family as the spring from which comes the assumption of the rightness of other forms of social inequities and oppression. Boys and girls, he wrote

> acquire in the family along with regard for mother a habitual attitude of the males in the family to wife, daughter or sister. How rarely does a boy in his own family acquire a firm presupposition that girls are his equals. It is because boys grow up as intimate parts of actual sex inequality that men fail to see the grotesqueness of the assumption that one sex has an inherent right to determine the 'proper sphere' of another.[92]

He urged that there was no more direct way in which Christianity could promote "appreciation of humanity as such" than by the abolition of the sex caste within Christian families.

Coe dismissed all form of sentimentalizing the role of wife and mother which precluded the issue of equality. Even "reverential affection" can contain the "cruel poison" of wanting to keep a wife a permanent dependent. The recepient of such regard is often "pampered" into selfish passivity. "Thus," he wrote, "love itself, acting under the assumption of permanent inequality between the lovers, arrests the growth of the social capacities of both."[93]

Each family must become a deliberative group in which every member according to his ability participates in decision making. In addition to giving each person in the family a voice in family affairs, Coe recommended that each member perform "regular, defined, personal services"[94] within the family. The father is not excused from rendering personal services within the family just because he is the "provider;" nor are the children to be subject to constant, undefined, irregular demands from parents for personal service which would make them no better than servants. In the democratic family even young children will have areas in which they take the initiative and certain areas in which their judgment is final. Coe recommended that each child be given an allowance and held accountable for his expenditures. As soon as practicable a child should assume responsibility for the purchase and care of his own clothing.[95]

He recommended that the social unity of the family be strengthened by sharing in recreational activities, but insisted that a family's true unity lay in its commitment to social tasks. "There is simply no possibility of fulfilling love in a narrow circle,"[96] he wrote, because the exclusive family is the self-undermining family. The family as a whole should be committed to worthwhile social projects in which they seek to meet human need in the community, the nation and the world. Coe did not recommend, as the slogan of the 1950's put it, that families that pray together stay together; rather families that work together for enduring social causes will stay together. "Every Christian family," he wrote, should identify themselves, "as a matter that involves their own life or death," with such movements as

> the abolition of child labor; the eight hour day for labor; a basic minimum income for all families; workmen's compensation laws and unemployment insurance; public housing; community recreation; good government.[97]

It is an impressive list showing Coe's broad social interests; only at two points does a genteel patrician note sound through the democratic rhetoric. The family was also to engage in activities which would eliminate "degrading amusements," not further specified; and the family was to be enlisted in the effort "to improve the human stock by adequate supervision of

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health, by preventing the prepagation of obviously unfit strains, and by inducing wiser mating."[98]

However, Coe's references to "unfit strains" and eugenic mating are infrequent; they drop completely out of later writing. In 1917 he was responding to a widespread intellectual fascination with social planning at a basic level; but he never flirted with the kind of racism which was then consolidating support within even progressive circles for stringent government restriction of immigration.[99]

Coe believed that social experiences within the family would prepare the child for further growth toward "the democracy of God." He believed that what was even then called "the problem of family worship" would disappear as families committed to deepening their social values experienced a re-birth of religious consciousness. Engagement in social tasks was the one sure way of making the family once again a vital source of religious nurture.

Finally, Coe argued that the family could not achieve its full potential for promoting democratic growth without implementing what he called "the domestication of property." He saw the legal and moral assumption that title to the family property is exclusively vested in the father as "an ancient wall of division within the family itself, a class distinction, a fundamental denial of brotherhood."[100] And, he asked

> How many holders of the purse escape being infected with the silent assumption that those whom one 'supports' are dependents, inferiors, persons to be controlled by giving and withholding, or perchance favorites who are to be attached to oneself by largesses?[101]

The only way to begin to move toward social democracy was for the work of women in the home to be recognized as fully as productive as any work done outside the home. "It would be a great step," he wrote

> if a stated amount were to be received by each married woman as her earnings . . . but beyond this will come partnership between husband and wife as equals in stewardship of the entire family income.[102]

Children, too, should receive fixed amounts for their participation in socially useful tasks within the home and for their participation in study (which, he noted, should have economic recognition as productive labor).[103]

From the perspective of the women's liberation movement of the 1970's nothing is more prescient in A Social Theory than Coe's recognition that the reconstruction of sex roles within the family is central to the task of achieving social justice in the wider community.

"I am indebted most of all," wrote Coe in the Foreword to A Social Theory, "to John Dewey, who is foremost among those who have put education and industrial democracy into a single perspective." This acknowledgment of the influence of another on his thought is a rare occurrence in Coe's writings and it indicates how deep Coe's sense of indebtedness must have been. As early as his Education in Religion and Morals[104] (1904), Dewey was a significant influence upon Coe; after 1909 they taught in two institutions almost adjacent to each other; and after 1922, when Coe came on the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia, they interacted with the same persons shaping progressive educational practice in the United States, most notably William Heard Kilpatrick.[105] However, all the evidence suggests that Coe was content to let his indebtedness to Dewey remain on an intellectual plane. Despite his frequent generous tributes to Dewey, Coe apparently neither sought nor received any recognition from Dewey of their common interests.

Kilpatrick recorded the response Dewey once made to the question, What is religious education? "Any education fit to be,"[106] answered America's sage of the schools. That answer when placed alongside Dewey's last statement in Democracy and Education [107] that all education which leads to larger participation in social life is moral indicates something of the range of meaning of "education" in Dewey's thought. Education is truly moral when it promotes social growth and when it does it well, it is religious. Coe would have understood perfectly a sentence like the preceding. But one wonders what the piling up of such relatively innocuous--and yet, upon examination, such wondrously complex concepts as "social," "moral," "religious"--could mean to someone who stood outside the matrix of the philosophy, psychology and sociology which informed their thought.

Various studies[108] have indicated the many points at which the philosophical and educational thought of Coe and Dewey converged. The two shared a similar social psychological perspective, each of them affirming that the self is a social being, a free moral agent, emerging out of the interaction with other selves and the physical environment. Their epistemological positions are similar; and there is much similarity in their axiological positions. But coe never completely eliminated a latent contradiction in his value theory. While he argued that all values were mutable, still he seemed in practice to argue that some values are changeless. For Coe, human personality in society is the normative value by which all other values are judged; and at many points his axiology was dependent upon an ontology which was not systematically explored. He recognized the contradiction in his assertion that values were dynamic and functional, but that personality was a value which somehow had rootage in being itself. There is a similar inconsistency in his attempt to combine a functional definition of religion with a personalist definition of God as being.

One student of his thought concluded that Coe was "vague on the uniqueness of Christianity";[109] but it could with equal justice be said that Coe spent a lifetime thinking through the unique meaning of Christianity. He once wrote that Christianity was first offered to him as dogma wrapped in mysticism.[110] His response was to see what, if anything, lay at the core when once dogma and mysticism were stripped away. He believed he found that core in the capacity of Christianity to stimulate human wants or desires. He defined religion as "the desire within desire itself";[111] and he always asserted that the value of Christianity was its capacity to stimulate human desire for the good.[112] But Coe's books never fully clarify whether Christianity is an intrinsic good or whether it has instrumental value only. While an original thinker, Coe was clearly not a system builder.

In A Social Theory of Religious Education, Coe argued that an adequate theory of religious education must include

1. a definition of the society regarded as desirable;
2. a conception of the original nature of man;
3. a description of the educational experiences which will lead to the desired sociality;
4. evaluative standards and tests by which achievement of such sociality can be tested.[113]

We have seen how Coe's response to the first criterion was to define the desired society as "a divine human industrial democracy." One study comparing the educational philosophy of Coe and Dewey concluded that Coe established a larger coherence of meaning for the desired sociality than did Dewey.[114] This judgment, however, seems to be based on an insufficient understanding of the radical nature of Dewey's instrumentalism. It does underscore, however, the breadth of Coe's conception of democracy.

The educational experiences which Coe recommended for the church school follow the pattern already traced by Dewey in The Child and The Curriculum and The School and Society.[115] Finally, evaluative standards and tests for religious education were to be judged by their capacity for assisting the young to grow in their participation in social tasks. Only participation in the struggle against specific social injustices and inequities would be the marks of growth toward "efficient" self-realization within the kingdom. While brief, this summary indicates how closely Coe followed the pattern of educational theorizing drawn by Dewey.

In 1940, in an article entitled "The Definitive Dewey,"[116] Coe himself sought to assess the significance of Dewey for the religious education movement. He recalled "the almost tender regard for religious growth"[117] in children and adults which characterized Dewey's address to the Religious Education Association in 1903. He argued that Dewey's thought once fully worked out would not have the secularist emphasis attributed to it.

Dewey's philosophy requires, he wrote, not only that we surrender the idea of the supernatural, but that we surrender the idea that there is such a thing as natural experience. The sword of instrumentalism, he wrote "is two edged and cuts two ways, leaving us neither nature nor the supernatural as the religious tradition conceives them."[118] He drew attention to Dewey's assertion in A Common Faith that the universe itself is friendly to the emergence of conscience and character. Nature in Dewey's thought includes ideas and moral creativity is subsumed under experience. The possibility of continuity and organization of values within Dewey's system points to the fact that we live in "an ethical comos, not an ethical chaos."[119]

Coe drew attention to the affirmations that accrue from Dewey's thought; affirmations, which Coe noted, some might hold together in the concept of "God." In addition to conscience and character, Coe saw Dewey as affirming the friendliness of nature to the emergence of

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1. science
2. philosophy;
3. aesthetic appreciation;
4. growth of personality through education;
5. growth of respect for personality;
6. democracy as the apogee of cooperative thinking and planning.[120]

Coe argued that the concept of God which Dewey rejected was itself a concept repudiated in liberal theology. Dewey, he wrote, rejected the idea of God

> as one who in his own being already incorporates and enjoys all true values (even making things valuable or not valuable by fiat), and guarantees the outcome of history, . . . He rejects it for both epistemological and ethical reasons. Belief in such a God is what he means by supernaturalism, which he thinks actually stands in the way of a genuinely religious attitude.[121]

Coe noted that several philosophies of religion developed partly under Dewey's influence were in existence which rejected supernaturalism but nevertheless affirmed the existence of God in a sense that outran even the affirmations of Dewey. "God is conceived, for example," he wrote

> as the personality-producing power in the universe, or as a cosmic reservoir of values, or as the sustaining ground of the human quest of the good . . . These theisms do not traffic in infinities and absolutes; [they do not support authoritarianisms]: they think of God, not as above process but as in process, even struggle, in somewhat the same sense as ourselves.[122]

This is a remarkable passage in which Coe went out of his way to make the clearest statement of the influence of Dewey upon his own concept of God.

It is a suggestive historical coincidence that Coe's A Social Theory was published in the same year in which the Progressive Education Association was organized. Lawrence A.

Cremin has characterized the latter as signaling the end of "the progressive impulse" in American education.[123] Similarly, Coe's major work signaled the end of the effort begun at Chicago in 1903 to translate the new theology into relevant educational practice.

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CHAPTER V FOOTNOTES

1. Major J. Jones, "The Place of God in the Educational Process According to George A. Coe, William C. Bower and Harrison S. Elliott" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Theology, 1957) included some biographical information on Elliott who succeeded Coe as professor of religious education at Union when Coe resigned in 1922. Elliott wrote the major work responding to the neo-orthodox critique of religious education, Can Religious Education be Christian? (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949).

2. Smith, et al., American Christianity, II, p. 220 quoted from Elliott's article, "Left-Right: Which Way to Religion?" The Drew Gateway VII (July 1936): 1.

3. One of the most influential Protestant journals of opinion, The Christian Century, was founded in 1908 by Charles Clayton Morrison, see Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 777.

4. Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 13-14.

5. Smith, et al., American Christianity, II, p. 220.

6. Shailer Mathews, Patriotism and Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1918); Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 886, noted that although Mathews wrote with idealistic fervor, he painted "a world picture in solid blacks and whites and did his utmost to make religion an intrinsic component of national solidarity." Such a judgment could not be made against Coe. Nationalistic fervor among ministers is well documented in Ray Hamilton Abrams, Preachers Present Arms: A Study of War-Time Attitudes and Activities of the Churches and the Clergy of the United States, 1914-1918 (New York: Round Table Press, 1933).

7. Walter Scott Athearn in the Foreword to Religious Education and American Democracy (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1917).

8. Robert D. Cross in his Introduction to Christianity and the Social Order described the decisive impact of the war upon Rauschenbusch; Rauschenbusch died before he could revise his socialist interpretation of Christianity in the light of the twentieth century's first Armageddon.

9. Coe wrote of the debilitating effect of the war on many ministers in "The Religious Breakdown of the Ministry," *Journal of Religion* I (1921): 18-29.

10. Coe, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 74, n. 1.

11. Coe, *A Social Theory*, p. 131.

12. Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., *Mother Night* (New York, 1968), p. 103.

13. Coe, "Do You Really Believe in Religious Education?" *Religious Education* XIV (1919: 5-11, p. 11.

14. Coe, "Educating Toward Peace," *Religious Education* XIX (1924): 318-321.

15. Coe, *Motives of Men*, Chap. 3, "What the War Did to our Belief in Man."

16. There is a letter dated February 27, 1940 in the Coe collection at Yale Divinity School from Coe to a former student of his, Walter F. Dexter, then Superintendent of Public Instruction in California. Coe wrote to him to enlist his aid in ending compulsory drill at the University of California. Dexter's reply was non-committal but he did refer to "our general convictions."

17. Coe, "Those Class-conscious Proletarians." *Zion's Herald*, July 1, 1936, pp. 632-633.

18. See, Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel*. Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History*, p. 367 noted that students from Northwestern conducted a settlement in Chicago; Woodie, "George A. Coe's Concept of Valuation," p. 47, gives some information on Ward and Coe's relationship. The "inside story" of the Social Creed is told by Creighton Lacy in *Frank Mason North: His Social and Ecumenical Mission*, Chap. 7. Background information on its adoption by the Federal Council of Churches is described in Elias B. Sanford, *Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (Hartford, 1916), pp. 493-509.

19. Harry F. Ward, *Social Evangelism* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), p. 26. Other books by Ward are *Christianizing Community Life* (New York: Association Press, 1917) with Richard Henry Edwards; *The New Social Order: Principles and Programs* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1919); *Our Economic Morality and the Ethics of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1929); *Which Way Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1931); *Democracy and Social Change* (New York: Modern Age Bks., 1940); *The Soviet Spirit* (New York: International Publishers, 1945).

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There is ample documentation of Ward's socialist activities in Ralph Lord Roy, Communism and the Churches (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. 1960).

20. Georgia Harkness, Foundations of Christian Knowledge (New York: Abingdon Press, 1955), p. 110, defined neo-orthodoxy as a movement which stressed the uniqueness of the Bible as the Word of God; the centrality within the Bible of the revelation of God in Christ; the redemptiveness of this revelation; the transcendent holiness of God; the sinfulness and inadequacy of man; the personal need of divine forgiveness and grace; and the primacy of faith. Kendig Brubaker Cully in The Search for a Christian Education--Since 1940 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 13-25, summed up the criticism levelled against the religious educators by their conservative critics.

21. In the Coe collection at Yale Divinity School, a note accompanying a review of Coe's What is Religion Doing To Our Consciences in The Christian Leader (June 14, 1943) from a Unitarian friend, Angus MacLean, praised Coe for providing the alternative.

22. Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: Macmillan Co., 1916.

23. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 33 n. 1.

24. Ibid., p. 25.

25. Ibid., pp. 74-80, in Chap. 7, Coe incorporated material from his inaugural address at Union in 1909, "Can Religious Education Be Taught?" Inaugural Address by George Albert Coe (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1909).

26. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 145; religion, he wrote, "appears historically as a living out . . . of the interests that . . . gather about the life of men in societies," pp. 141-142.

27. Ibid., p. 99.

28. Ibid., p. 186.

29. Ibid., Part V, pp. 295-342.

30. Ibid., p. 295.

31. Ibid., p. 296.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p. 298.

35. Ibid. His negative bias toward Catholicism is evident in Education for Citizenship published in 1932. In a letter to Hugh Hartshorne quoted in Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation," p. 22, he wrote that Protestantism contains the germs of self-transcendence but Roman Catholicism does not. The Coe collection at Yale Divinity School has correspondence between Coe and a Catholic priest, Roderick MacEachen, on the faculty of Catholic University of America. In 1927 MacEachen asked Coe to write a preface for a book on Catholic "intellectual tyranny" which he was planning to write anonymously. The correspondence identifies MacEachen as the author of two articles which appeared anonymously in The Atlantic CXL (1928): 12-21; 158-166; the articles were sharply critical of the educational philosophy of the Roman Catholic Church, MacEachen calling the parochial school a "heresy" against the modern educational consensus. The two became very close and MacEachen visited Coe at his camp in Lonely Lake on several occasions.

36. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 304-305.

37. Ibid., p. 305.

38. Ibid., p. 306.

39. Ibid., p. 313.

40. Ibid., p. 317.

41. Ibid., p. 318.

42. Ibid., p. 323.

43. Ibid., p. 324.

44. Ibid., p. 325. Edwin Scott Gaustad in A Religious History of America (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 144, noted that Methodism as a movement "may be characterized by four features: (1) pietism, (2) individualism, (3) reductionism, and (4) perfectionism" all of which reinforced democratic sentiment in the United States.

45. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 325.

46. Ibid., pp. 327-328.

47. Ibid., p. 329.

48. See, Albert Outler, Evangelism in the Wesleyan Spirit (Nashville: Tidings Press, 1971); the fullest treatment is in the four volumes edited by the Board of Social and Economic Relations of the Methodist Church, Methodism and Society.

49. Ibid., p. 335.

50. Ibid. In What Is Christian Education?, pp. 55-59, Coe argued that traditional transmissive education in the church "thinking to make men obedient to God, brings some men into subjection to others;" this objection followed naturally from his belief that mystical revelation was not a source of knowledge.

51. Smith, Faith and Nurture, Chap. 5, "The Church: Community of Christian Nurture," argued forcefully that the church ignored by the religious liberals was a unique community; he referred to the church as the community "of the divine initiative," "of the ultimate fulfillment of life," "of divine mediation." Coe, however, valued the church above other social agencies because it pointed to the possibility of "loving to the uttermost," which, in turn, Coe called "the spirit of self criticism to the uttermost," A Social Theory, pp. 93-94.

52. Smith, Faith and Nurture, pp. 2-26, took this route identifying the emergence of immanental theology with deism; however, this completely overlooked the fact that immanentalism derived even more from pietism.

53. See, Raymond B. Culver, Horace Mann and Religion in the Massachusetts Public Schools (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929).

54. "Rationalist" in the sense that they made their primary appeal to the mind; Morton White in "Reflections on Anti-intellectualism," Daedalus (Summer 1962): 457-468 noted that while Emerson's transcendentalism was anti-intellectualist, it made its primary appeal to intellectuals.

55. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 328.

56. As early as 1900 in The Spiritual Life, Coe rejected mystical revelation. In A Social Theory, he argued that sin is our anti-social instincts, confirmed by habit, and made the basis of anti-social thinking, feeling and acting, Chap. 8. "The Struggle With Sin." As early as 1902, in The Religion of A Mature Mind, he described salvation as an educative process.

57. Smith, Faith and Nurture, p. 41, attributed Coe's use of "democracy of God" solely to Dewey's emphasis upon "democracy and education"; but as this study indicates the origin of this phrase may lie in its use in personalist philosophy devolving from the Kantian "kingdom of ends," and also in the millenial ethos of Coe's boyhood and the Social Gospel movement.

58. Marty E. Marty, The Modern Schism: Three Paths to the Secular (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) referred to the continental path as "utter secularity"; to the English path as "mere secularity"; and to the American path as "controlled secularity" through use of "transformed symbols."

59. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 166.

60. Ibid., p. viii.

61. Ibid., p. 13.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid. Coe, of course, followed Dewey in thus seeing society as the educator within all education; however Lawrence A. Cremin in The Genuis of American Education (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1965), p. 7, noted that although emphasizing the educative process in and through all social institutions, Dewey took "the grand-jete of twentieth century educational theory" when he declared that the school must do the job the home, shop, neighborhood and church can no longer do; by the middle of Democracy and Education "public education has become co-extensive with the education of the public."

64. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 13; italicized in the original.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid., p. 15.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., p. 16.

69. Ibid., p. 18.

70. Ibid., p. 25.

71. Ibid., p. 27.

72. *Ibid.*, Chap. 2, "General Exposition of Social Standpoint." Coe explored this further in "The Functions of Children in Society," *Religious Education* XVI (February 1921): 29-36.

73. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (Chicago: Open Court, 1925; revised by Dewey in 1929 and reissued in 1958 by Dove Publishing Co. in New York).

74. The beginning of the neo-orthodox theological movement is usually identified with the publication in 1919 of Barth's *Epistle to the Romans*, a profound statement of the uniqueness and authority of the Biblical revelation; the English translation from the 6th ed. was by Edwin C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

75. Karl Barth, *Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl*, pp. 38-40; Barth wrote that the eighteenth century was "most emphatically" the century of educational ideas.

76. *Ibid.*

77. Chapter 10, *Education in Religion and Morals*.

78. "Two Comments," *The Christian Century* L (March 15, 1933): 362-364; see also Coe, "The Assault Upon Liberalism," *Religious Education* XXXIV (April-June 1939): 85-92.

79. The most able of the neo-orthodox critiques of religious education was H. Shelton Smith's *Faith and Nurture* first published in 1941; it answered the defense of religious education which Harrison S. Elliott made in *Can Religious Education Be Christian*? (New York: Macmillan, 1940).

80. Coe, *A Social Theory*, p. 72.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

83. He continued, "To make his will known is a matter of social practice," *Ibid.*, p. 72.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 55; italicized in the original.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 55. In his 1929 book, *What Is Christian Education?*, Coe used the two terms interchangeably, noting in the Introduction that he would not define "Christian education" beyond stipulating that he meant by it the education currently going on in churches.

87. Albert Schweitzer concluded in his massive 1906 study, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, that we cannot know the historical Jesus apart from the eschatological perspective in which the early church viewed him. This conclusion led to a renewed emphasis upon the uniqueness of the Biblical revelation which neo-orthodoxy stressed. Leander E. Keck, A Future for the Historical Jesus: The Place of Jesus in Preaching and Theology (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), pp. 92-93, noted that Barth and Bultmann were separated from their liberal teachers because they distrusted inferences which grew up out of an identification of Jesus with human aspirations, an identification which Coe frequently made. But in Out of My Life and Thought: An Autobiography (originally published in 1933 by Henry Holt and Co. and republished with a Postscript 1932-1949 by Everett Skillings and translated by C. T. Campion by Mentor Books, 1953), pp. 48-50, Schweitzer showed himself more a pious liberal than a Barthian. "For even," he wrote, "if that liberal Christianity has to give up identifying its belief with the teachings of Jesus in the way it used to think possible, it still has the spirit of Jesus not against it but on its side. Jesus no doubt fits His teaching into the late Jewish Messianic dogma. But He does not think dogmatically. He formulates no doctrines. He is far from judging any man's belief by reference to any standard of dogmatic correctness. Thus the Sermon on the Mount becomes the incontestable charter of liberal Christianity. The truth that the ethical is the essence of religion is firmly established on the authority of Jesus."

88. Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 253.

89. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 207.

90. Ibid., p. 208.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid., p. 209.

93. Ibid., p. 211.

94. Ibid., p. 213.

95. Ibid., p. 214.

96. Ibid., p. 215.

97. Ibid., pp. 220-221.

98. Ibid., p. 221.

99. Paul Violas has traced a blatant form of racism and ethnocentrism in "Progressive Social Philosophy: Charles Horton Cooley and Edward Alsworth Ross," Chap. 3 in Clarence J. Karier, Paul C Violas and Joel Spring, Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century (Chicago: Rand McNally Co., 1973). A passage in Coe's 1928 book, Motives of Men, p. 14, well sums up Coe's freedom from racial theory. After noting that the war encouraged the belief in the superiority of the Allies and inferiority, not to say bestiality, of the Central Powers, Coe wrote: "The enemy state is totally bad, one and all; then the racial stock is totally bad, so that even the children of the enemy are unfit to live; conversely, we, belong to an innately superior stock, and our allies are about as good as we are." He continued that after the war there was a continued effort to look for innate superiorities and inferiorities of race; but "here, where many races both mingel and intermarry" racism could not long flourish. He criticized the use made of the results of the Army Alpha and Beta tests to reinforce racism in the 1920's. Jacobson, in Scott of Northwestern, p. 120, wrote that Walter Dill Scott, Coe's former student, was one of the five men who established the classification procedure for Army Personnel during World War I, but Coe's social interests by then led him far away from Scott's interests in personnel management policy.

100. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 218.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid., pp. 218-219.

103. Ibid., p. 219.

104. H. Shelton Smith wrote that Coe quoted John Dewey more than any other educational philosopher in Education in Religion and Morals, "Christian Education," Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century edited by Arnold S. Nash (New York: Macmillan, 1951), pp. 230-231; however, I found only one reference to Dewey on p. 14.

105. William H. Kilpatrick wrote an appreciative article, "Conceptions of Moral and Spiritual Education," in the Coe memorial issue of Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 83-86 in which he noted he and Coe were "in face to face intimacy" from 1917 to 1927; I have known," he wrote, "few, if any, to equal him, none, I believe, to surpass him."

106. William H. Kilpatrick, "The Nature of Human Nature," Religious Education XXXV (January-March 1940): 3-12; the Dewey quote is on p. 12.

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107. Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 360.

108. The following Ph.D. dissertations deal analytically with selected aspects of Coe's thought: Henry David Bremer, "George Albert Coe's Contribution to the Psychology of Religion" (Boston University, 1949); John Clifford Haney, Jr., "A Critical Comparison of the Educational Philosophy of John Dewey and George Albert Coe" (Boston University, 1959); Major J. Jones,"The Place of God in the Educational Process According to George A. Coe, William C. Bower and Harrison S. Elliott" (Boston University, 1957); Riley Herman Pittman, "The Meaning of Salvation in the Thought of George Albert Coe, William Clayton Bower and George Herbert Betts" (University of Southern California, 1946); McMurray Smith Richey, "Conceptions of Man in the Thought of George Albert Coe and William C. Bower" (Duke University, 1954); Norris B. Woodie, "George Albert Coe's Concept of Valuation Applied to Education" (Yale University, 1955).

109. This is one of Woodie's conclusions; Jones and Pittman stress the nontraditional features of Coe's concepts of man and salvation.

110. Coe, "My Own Little Theatre," p. 101.

111. Coe, Psychology of Religion, p. 68.

112. Coe, in the Introduction to Motives of Men, quoted the lines of the hymn: "Man wants but little here below/nor wants that little long," commenting, "If true, we would be in a bad fix. Man is only pried loose from his savagery by his wants." Coe used "instincts," "desires," "motives," and "wants" interchangeably. He called religion in his Psychology "the desire within desire"; in Motives of Men, "the motive that is in all and through all."

113. Coe, A Social Theory, p. 9.

114. Haney, "A Critical Comparison of the Educational Philosophy of John Dewey and George A. Coe," concluded that (1) Coe's metaphysical presuppositions give his educational philosophy a direction and unifying purpose which Dewey's philosophy lacked; (2) Coe and Dewey share similar epistemological positions; (3) their axiologies differ since Coe held that some values (e.g., personal selfhood) were intrinsic as well as instrumental; (4) their educational recommendations are identical, save for the very muted idealist echoes in Coe's writings that in the learning process the teacher, the pupil and God interact.

115. John Dewey, The Child and the Curriculum (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902) and The School and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900); both

re-published together with an Introduction by Leonard Carmichael by University of Chicago Press in 1963.

116. Coe, "The Definitive Dewey," _Religious Education_ XXXV (January-March 1940): 45-50.

117. Ibid., p. 47. Coe, however, did not refer to three articles in which Dewey discussed religious education at some length: (1) Dewey's 1908 article on "Religion and Our Schools" referred to in Chap. I of this study; (2) Dewey's 1924 article on "Fundamentals" referred to in Chap. II; and (3) Dewey's "The American Intellectual Frontier," _The New Republic_ XXX (May 10, 1922): 303-305.

118. _Ibid._, p. 48.

119. _Ibid._

120. _Ibid._

121. _Ibid._, p. 49.

122. _Ibid._

123. The title of Part I of Cremin's _The Transformation of the School_ is "The Progressive Impulse in Education, 1876-1917."

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CHAPTER VI

"IN THE SUNLIGHT": THE YEARS FROM 1920 TO 1951

Morton White once recommended that before evaluating any theorist, three levels of intellectual activity on which he may be operating should be distinguished.[1] The first is the level of politics, policy, or preaching in which the theorist makes a direct contribution to the day-to-day problems and controversies that engage his contemporaries. On the next level, the theorist establishes the principles of psychology and the basis for the values which will guide his approach to specific problems. The third and most abstract level of all is the level in which the theorist establishes his own basic philosophical belief and discusses the method whereby he justifies the different kinds of knowledge he claims to have.

The way in which Coe's thought matured makes such a tiered approach to evaluation not only desirable but almost inevitable. Coe concentrated in his early career upon a clarification of his basic metaphysical and epistemological principles; next he developed his theory of value and related it to his functional view of psychology. Lastly, he justified a social test for values, including values so unified and intensified in experience that he identified them as religious in quality.

The content of Coe's second and third levels of abstraction were discussed in Chapters III through V. Now it is appropriate to focus attention on the way in which Coe employed these fundamental themes to the changing social scene in America from 1920 to 1951 in five widely read books and numerous articles.

During his lifetime Coe's political judgments and policy recommendations led many to revere him as a prophetic social critic.[2] It is important to explore whether or not from the perspective of the seventies that judgment can be sustained. Coe himself, of course, would have welcomed the revaluation of his judgments based on the social experience of the last quarter century. He believed that values are reconstructed and clarified in experience, and that "in time" the obligation imposed by clearly defined values becomes more inescapable. He would have anticipated that social critics of the seventies might well surpass him in ethical sensitivity to the needs of persons in modern industrial society.

Coe believed that human history and human life itself took its dignity and meaning from this ongoing process by which values are clarified in history. Even Reinhold Niebuhr, the great critic of the progressive view of history, testified obliquely to the process which Coe celebrated. Niebuhr perceived the experience of revaluation of value within history as a "tragic" or "ironic" working out of unanticipated consequences of the values which an earlier generation embraced with joy.[3] While to Coe the experience by which values were revalued and transvalued was an experience begetting confidence in humanity's future development, to Niebuhr it was but one more vindication of the fall of Adam. Fortunately, it is extraneous to this study to decide which of these psychological moods is the more appropriate one with which to greet the revisions which time brings to all historical judgments and values.

Any criticism relevant to an analysis of Coe must itself be multilevel. Evaluation in the light of historical experience can invalidate his practical suggestions, but only philosophical analysis can challenge his basic premises. It is possible, for instance, to defend his judgments on the level of social policy or educational programs while questioning the validity of his axiological or epistemological premises. Alternatively, someone might share his basic premises--or, at least, some of them--and yet find his practical applications of them discredited by subsequent events. Before reviewing Coe's work as a social and educational critic in the years from 1920 to 1951, it is important to note how what Carl Becker called "the climate of prevailing opinion" in those years differed from the climate of the years of Coe's formative intellectual experiences in the 1880's.

While Coe repudiated the profession and the methodology of theology, he always identified his "faith philosophy" with the inner meaning of the Christian faith. It was of course from the Harnack school that he learned to make a distinction between dogmatic historical Christianity and "the essence" of Christianity, an essence which he consistently identified with

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ethics. And his ethics, in turn, were much influenced by Schiller's humanism and James's pragmatism. However, beginning in 1919 when Karl Barth published his Commentary on Romans,[4] these premises of Coe's "faith philosophy" came under comprehensive attack. Barth's work was greeted almost immediately in theological circles throughout Europe as a prophetic judgment upon the liberalism of Ritschl and Harnack. By the early thirties a critique of liberalism undertaken from Barth's neo-orthodox or neo-Reformation theological position was beginning in America under the leadership of Reinhold Niebuhr. With great power Barth and his American interpreters restated the central Reformation doctrines. The authority of the Bible as the unique "Word of God" to mankind was stressed. Salvation was declared to be *sola fide*: it was the gracious act of God which could be received through faith alone. Simply stated, neo-orthodoxy inverted every one of the three great principles of liberalism. Immanence was denied while the transcendent God was described as "the Wholly Other," a being inaccessible to human understanding apart from revelation. In place of continuity, neo-orthodoxy stressed the complete separation between the realm of nature and the realm of the spirit. However autonomous man might be in other spheres, neo-orthodoxy interpreted man as completely dependent upon the grace of God for his spiritual well-being.

Neo-orthodoxy in Europe often condemned not only liberal theology, but also the social activism of the liberals who embraced the Social Gospel.[5] In America, however, although Niebuhr labored hard to undermine liberal confidence in the power of politics, economics and education to transform the human condition, he was himself a tireless and courageous political activist. While he repeatedly attacked the theological stance behind the activism of the Social Gospel movement, he did not condemn activism per se. Skeptical that "parades in behalf of proximate justice" would ever attract crowds, Niebuhr still taught his followers to engage in social action with a chastened awareness that in human life we can only approximate divine justice, we cannot achieve it.

The neo-orthodox critique of Coe's basic premises is significant because it dramatically highlights the fact that by the late 1930's the coincidence in theory between the religious education movement and the progressive education movement which he outlined so persuasively in 1904 was being challenged. The common roots of both these movements lay in the eighteenth century. When neo-orthodoxy sought to bypass the eighteenth century and reach back to the sixteenth for an authoritarian interpretation of Christian faith, it challenged the place that the Enlightenment held in the center of liberal theology. For Barth, and only slightly less so for Niebuhr, the eighteenth century is not so much the century of rational light as it is the century of illusions about the human condition. Man's presumption--or hybris--was written into all its works. Indeed, for Barth, as noted above, the pride of the schoolteacher that he could fashion persons and shape human destiny itself was

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most characteristic form of the hybris of the eighteenth century.[6]

The neo-orthodox movement had important consequences for Protestant educational theory because it emphasized that the church has an educational legacy far older than the eighteenth century to guide it in the development of its educational purposes. But by this very emphasis, it introduced a cleavage between the principles of religious education and the principles of secular education, for it is questionable if the modern state supported school has a source for theory earlier than the eighteenth century.[7] American Barthians were not slow to assert that the contributions of general education with its Enlightenment legacy to religious education were dubious at best and at worst subversive. By challenging the assumption that theology and education had a common legacy in the eighteenth century, neo-orthodoxy challenged Coe's merger of the two legacies in his 1904 statement on the philosophy of the religious education movement.[8] Indeed, as early as 1902, Coe summarized the radical implications of this common legacy in the phrase, "salvation by education." Coe interpreted the saving will of God as educative in intent and purpose. Such a phrase was pale and unscriptural to the Barthians who gave little weight to the New Testament passages where Jesus is reverently called "Teacher." They sought instead to re-capture the transcendental claims of "the Christ" as "Lord of lords, and King of kings," and "very God of very God." Having experienced in World War I the collapse of the world outlook of the eighteenth century and the liberal theology which Ritschl and Harnack built upon it, they were far nearer in mood to the claims of an irrevocable judgment and the hope of unmerited mercy than they were to confidence in an educative providence at work in history.[9]

Thus by the late 1920's the tide of theology was running against Coe. There is evidence to suggest, too, that by then the tide of social and political progressivism which gave his "faith philosophy" its social relevance in the image of "a divine human industrial democracy" was also receeding in America.

While it is difficult to periodize so protean a movement as progressivism, there is consensus among historians that the progressive movement developed as the agrarian based populist reform movement diminished in the 1890's.[10] Hofstadter wrote that the generation that came of age in the 1890's--Coe's intellectual generation--was the generation that went Progressive in the first decade and a half of the twentieth century.[11] Progressivism, an urban and middle class based movement almost exclusively, grew up in response to urban industrial conditions against which populism fought but which it could not control. Since reform is almost endemic in American life, it is difficult to demarcate the periods of particular American reform movements; however, progressivism is usually dated from the mid-1890's to 1917. Historians interpret the Social Gospel movement as a theological response to the same urban and industrial conditions which nurtured progressivism. Hopkins, who did the first and still most widely accepted history of the Social Gospel movement, dates it from 1865 to 1915.[12] Both Progressivism and the Social Gospel movement declined during the war years; war, as Hofstadter remarked, always being the Nemesis of the liberal tradition in America.[13] It is interesting to note that Lawrence A. Cremin also fixed the year when America entered World War I as the date when progressive education passed from its creative period to a period of institutionalization.[14]

Progressivism in politics and the Social Gospel movement within American Protestant theology were both responses to major economic changes occurring within the nation. Industry came of age during the years from 1860 to 1900; these were the years, too, when an urban network stretching across the continent was completed.[15] Industrialism and urbanism weakened regional identities and disrupted local values. They fostered an economic and social nationalization of American life. Wiebe sees the whole period from 1877 to 1920 as "a search for order" within a society characterized by radical and rapid change accompanied by the loss of all traditional controls.[16]

While the Protestant ethic based upon personal relationships made sense in the socially homogeneous rural and small towns of nineteenth century America, the urban and industrial dislocations of the end of the century produced a crisis for church going America.[17] Ministers as well as educators turned to sociologists to help them understand the meaning of the change which came over American community life as a result of industrialization. Sociologists described pre-industrial communities as small enough to permit cooperative interaction among their members; they were communities in which social controls were largely unorganized while group identification and group loyalty were strong. Post-industrial societies were, however, large and required members to interact with one another in highly specialized roles. Regulated by formal controls, the post-industrial society was less intimate and more constrained than agriculturally based communities. The German sociologist, Ferdinand Tönnies, called the first type, Gemeinschaft, the second, Gesellschaft. Charles H. Cooley taught Americans to describe the relationships of the earlier community as "primary," the relationships of the new cities as "secondary."[18] Progressives saw this sea change coming over social relationships as presenting a critical challenge. Progressive educators argued that schools must offset the harmful effects of a growingly depersonalized society by becoming themselves centers for experiencing primary relationships. Progressive ministers, too, frequently defined the church as a socially valuable institution because it offered its members the support of intimate, face to face primary relationships.

While it flourished, the progressive movement was highly influenced by intellectuals and by academicians: sociologists like Cooley and Albion Small; economists like Ely and Veblen; historians like Beard and Robinson; Holmes and Brandeis in law; and, supremely in philosophy and education, John Dewey. It is a significant indication of the cross fertilization of ideas among the progressive theorists that one historian includes Ely along with Gladden and Rauschenbusch as an architect of the Social Gospel movement; while another includes Rauschenbusch along with Cooley and Dewey as a major contributor to the theory of the social nature of natural man.[19]

The progressive mind of these leaders was fascinated by evolution in nature and attracted to the dynamic possibilities of change within social and intellectual life. Although in "the age of complacency" that fell upon the nation immediately following the Civil War, the first social implications drawn from Darwinian biology were highly conservative, by the end of the century what Hofstadter calls "reform Darwinism" was the hallmark of American intellectuals in jurisprudence, in economics, in sociology, in education, and in politics.[20] These intellectuals replaced the pre-Darwinian concept of a "block universe" with the concept of an evolving universe of infinite possibilities. They moved easily from the concept of the mutability of species within nature to the concept of the mutability of all social institutions.[21]

While historians frequently see this "progressive mind" fashioned by "reform Darwinism" crumbling under the impact of World War I, some identify a continuous "age of reform" from the 1890's to the 1930's. Indeed, Eric Goldman described America as having a "rendezvous" with a reform destiny from the end of the Civil War through to Truman's election in 1948.[22] These years, it should be noted, cover the life span of Coe almost exactly.

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It would be no exaggeration to say that Coe's whole life was a rendezvous with reform. During his youth in the Genesee Valley he was exposed to millennial and perfectionist groups who desired a complete transformation of social and economic life. He grew up in a parsonage and imbibed from his parents both an evangelicalism that stressed experience and a Methodism which tied faith to responsible social action. He attended Boston University during the very period when the Yankee reformers of that city were engaged in the first phase of urban reform. He lived close to a teeming Chicago during most of Jane Addams "first twenty years at Hull House" and observed the physical growth of the city, the disparity of wealth among its citizens, the ethnic diversity of its immigrants and the confusion and chicanery of its municipal government. He was in New York City from 1909 to 1927 and, although the evidence is meagre, he may have participated in several political struggles, especially after 1922.

Historians have raised questions about the character and motivation of those who gave their support to the progressive movement, most of whom were drawn from the ranks of the middle class Protestant establishment. Were they "displaced patricians," "Yankee reformers," who sought for a new footing for themselves in an industrial, urban age?[23] Were they persons conscious that their elite privileges and status as representatives of an Anglo-Saxon Protestant establishment were being undermined by the new methods in industrial culture and the new ethnic strains in the national culture?[24] Did they themselves seek to undermine that

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establishment or perpetuate it? Were the values of the reformers in law, sociology, education, theology and journalism truly liberal and democratic as their rhetoric claimed? Or, in a kind of Hegelian double-think, did they define "the new freedom" as the acceptance of state controls and the Jeffersonian "promise of American life" as an organic nationalism far more total than Hamilton's vision?[25] Did democracy become in their hands merely a means by which social control could be internalized and hence a means by which mass conformity could be achieved? Even the progressive saint of Halsted Street, Jane Addams, has not escaped the charge that within all her reform activities there lay a covert intention to secure new means of control and conformity within the urban matrix.[26] Today some of the most vigorous writing in educational history identifies "the roots of crisis" of contemporary education in the progressive theories and practices of the early decades of the twentieth century.[27]

Kirkland asked at the end of his study of the coming of age of industry in the period from 1860 to 1897: "was it all wrong?"[28] Coe, too, came to maturity of mind during that same forty years. Were the principles of continuity, dynamism and autonomy which lay at the base of his progressivism in religion and education "all wrong?" Just as industrialism was creating an urban network and destroying local and regional cultures in favor of a nationalization of American life were the root principles of Coe's liberalism destroying individualism even within the confines of the sacred? Could Coe's search for the normal

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pattern of religious development and for social tests of religious experience have its sinister side? Did his ideal of "the mature mind" in religion really introduce a rationalism and conformity into the dominant religious tradition in America similar to the rationalism and conformity demanded by the industrial culture? Was Coe a great social prophet in the tradition of the prophets of Israel who spoke boldly before kings? Or was he perhaps an unwilling agent for social forces, "a false prophet," who spoke smoothly to the representatives of power in his age? Did his theorizing merely point to "the wave of the future," or did he identify some high ground on which his followers could withstand the flood of "the corporate ideal in the liberal state?"[29] An analysis of Coe's practical activity and educational prescriptions during the turbulent decades from 1920 to 1950 may provide the answers. Before turning to such an analysis, however, some biographical notes are in order.

Abruptly in 1922, Coe left the faculty of Union Theological Seminary and joined the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia. Although he made a deliberate attempt to hide the reasons for his departure, it is clear that he resigned from Union first and that Teachers College, taking advantage of his availability, then invited him to develop a Master's program in moral and religious education. Thirty years later he still felt keenly enough about whatever occasioned his resignation to request in his will donating his papers to Yale Divinity School that all correspondence dealing with his last years at Union be sealed for nearly another quarter century.[30]

Throughout the late twenties and the thirties, Coe made frequent derisive comments about Union in his personal correspondence. He called it "onion teaological cemetary"; wrote that it could no longer be called "a school for prophets"; and advised a young friend planning to enter the ministry to avoid Union at all costs.[31] By then his animus against the seminary seems clearly to have been based on theological differences. However, when Coe resigned, Union was still under the influence of theological liberalism. In fact, Reinhold Niebuhr, far from being neo-orthodox, was himself a young pastor in Detroit in 1922 conducting a ministry among automobile workers directly inspired by the Social Gospel movement.[32] Only slowly during the twenties did Niebuhr abandon his theological liberalism; and it was not until 1928, the year after Coe retired from Teachers College, that Niebuhr became professor of Christian Ethics at Union. Union did not become the center of the neo-orthodox movement under his leadership until the early thirties.

Just as there did not seem to be any issue of academic freedom involved in Coe's departure from Northwestern in 1909, so, too, his departure from Union seems to be unrelated to any issue of academic freedom. A biographer may regret that the sill life of Coe was not broken at this point by some issue which forced him into a personal involvement in controversy. Rather than adopt a policy of full and frank disclosure of whatever differences existed between himself and the faculty or administration, Coe avoided controversy by resigning and suppressing his interpretation of the dispute. Since he surrounded his leaving with secrecy, we cannot know the issue that percipitated his resignation or what opportunity he may have lost when he took the option of resigning. We do have, however, his own judgment that he gained "the best teaching years of his career" when he moved to Teachers College in 1922 at sixty years of age.[33]

Throughout the 1920's, a decade known by many tags--"the jazz age," "the era of wonderful nonsense," "the aspirin age," "the dry decade"--Coe pursued the implications of his thought so meticulously worked out in the Edwardian calm of Evanston years before.[34] He did not belong spiritually to Fitzgerald's lost generation who grew up "to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faith in man shaken."[35] In his books he addressed himself to the unease of what Roderick Nash has called "the nervous generation";[36] but he did not write as one who was himself tired, disillusioned or discontented.

Despite his intellectual radicalism and his prophetic eloquence, however, whenever Coe gave an illustration from life in one of his books or letters, he unwittingly pointed to the fact that he led a most sheltered academic life. Once when he was arguing that the demand for higher wages was not simply a materialistic demand, but was instead a pre-condition of the worker's cultural development, he wrote

> The other day a gentleman remarked, 'I have been amazed at the intelligence of my chauffeur who, as far as schools are concerned, is an uneducated man.

> The secret of it is that he had procured a radio set wherewith he listens to lectures and sermons. Every Sunday, he says, he hears a sermon by an eminent clergyman.[37]

As late as 1935, he wrote to a friend that he only recently learned the "severe lesson" that the academic life generates its own illusions and is not the most favorable environment for discovering the truth about social relations. He commented that he was led to this conclusion partly by hearing a workingman condemn a local public library because it did not contain the major writings of socialists.[38]

Coe's prose, sprinkled as it is with phrases such as "social joy" and "social tasks," obscures the fact that he was himself a solitary bachelor who led a most regulated private life. Almost unvaringly from 1909 to 1927, he left New York City on the day the spring term ended and did not return from his Canadian camp until the first day of the fall term. He named his sailboat "School's Out." The life he lived in the months school was out was a well-guarded private life. Some evidence indicates that he was a somewhat aloof teacher, little given to socializing with his students or colleagues. He once wrote of religious liberals that their besetting sin is that they become onlookers rather than participants in life. He himself may have been such a liberal onlooker. Even during his Marxist years when he permitted many organizations to use his name on their letterheads, he was living serenely "in the sunlight" of a church related retirement home in Claremont, California.

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Two years after joining the faculty at Teachers College, Coe published Law and Freedom in the School.[40] This book grew out of his conviction "that the project method has come into education--has been coming into it for more than a century--to stay there, and to grow until it dominates schools of all grades."[41] Although, predictably, there is only one reference to the father of the project method, William Heard Kilpatrick, Coe wrote his essay to clarify the social conditions which determined the will of the pupils and teachers when they "freely" engage in the project method of learning. In his one reference to Kilpatrick, Coe described the concomitant learnings which Kilpatrick saw as giving significance to the project method; but he himself focused upon the conditioning environment in natural law, statute law, moral law and economic necessity which limited the selection of projects.

Law and Freedom in the School is interesting now chiefly because it indicates that Coe, even when most dependent upon the methodology of the progressive education movement, was sensitive to the shaping influences of the society of which the school was merely a small part. School projects are limited, of course, by such natural considerations as the strength and motor skill of children at different ages; but, he argued they are also limited by the consensus of the surrounding community of what is appropriate moral behavior; limited by statute law which requires the school to perform certain tasks; and limited by economic conditions which restrict both opportunities and materials for project

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learning. Law and Freedom is an extended treatment of Coe's statement in A Social Theory that "the educator within all education is society." His focus upon the religious development of persons in society thus enabled him to avoid even during his years at Teachers College an excessive emphasis upon the school as the one educational institution for the public. Coe's commitment to the social aim of religious education always permitted him to balance deliberate education within the institution of the school with the informal education supplied by the family, by churches, and by other institutions in society. Coe, of course, also never lost sight of the need for deliberate education within the church. His 1932 study, Education for Citizenship,[42] emphasized the need for deliberate education by religious agencies to counterbalance the near monopoly of public education and to permit a prophetic revaluation of national values themselves.

His seventh book was completed "by a campfire" in his Canadian camp retreat at the end of July 1924. Referring to himself as "an old teacher," he dedicated his book to those of his students who questioned his teaching. Like Law and Freedom, this slim volume was an extended essay on a single theme. The title, What Ails Our Youth?,[43] set the question which Coe explored with penetrating simplicity. He believed that the suggestibility of youth accounted for both the conformity of the majority of youth and the social criticism of the minority. He argued, however, that in each group, suggestible youth were responding to different social clues.

Coe emphasized that not all youth approached their culture critically. The vast majority based their behavior and their thinking upon the folkways and mores of the society surrounding them. Only a minority of youth perceived emerging social conditions which were challenging the folkways. Coe argued that critical youth were responding to social conditions which conventional youth overlooked. Among these were the increased technological control of nature which held out the promise of greater control over social and economic life; changes in sex roles brought about by the changed status of women in technological society; the shift from primary relationships to secondary relationships in industrial society; and the social dislocations caused by an industrial economy which affected all of life but was responsive only to the demands of private profit.

In a typical reversal of popular judgment, he warned that society has far more to fear from the young person who is excessively conventional than it does from the young person who enters maturity with a critical and even censorious attitude. "The great and deadly rashness of youth," he wrote, "takes the form of their hasty acquiescence."[44] While youth might be a source of a new "greening" in the culture, most young people merely took on the coloration of their society.[45] Coe asked what should be done about the few youth who escape becoming conventional. His answer was brief. We should, he wrote, increase their number as quickly as we can.

Written a half century ago, Coe's analysis of the youth culture of the twentieth century is still stimulating. He recognized that the growing differentiation between the old and the young--what is now commonly called "the generation gap"--was due to the rapidity and pervasiveness of social change. However, Coe was more discriminating in his discussion of the tension between the young and old in modern society than are many contemporary commentators who either fail to take account of the great majority of conventional youth or who fail to take account of the social function of critical youth.

Coe wrote that "the discovery of the child" as social critic and innovator was the greatest contribution of the nineteenth century to the progressive education of the twentieth century. Previous to the twentieth century, the creative, socially renewing function of childhood and youth was lost to society through neglect. "Generation after generation," wrote Coe four years later in Motives of Men "came and went, without discovering its own children."[46] He used a vivid phrase to sum up what he considered the neglect of the social utilization of the plasticity of childhood and youth; the neglect led, he argued, to a psychial inbreeding of adults. "By this I mean," he wrote

> that it is traditional for adults to segregate themselves as a supposedly self-sufficient portion of society, and to draw their standards, their experiences, their stimuli from among themselves. Through this inbreeding it comes to pass that each generation of grown-ups becomes the spiritual successor of the preceeding generation of grown-ups, whereas it should be the spiritual successor and heir of its own childhood.[47]

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Coe concluded that it is not the critical skepticism of the minority of youths which is our main threat. It is the conventional skepticism embodied in the customs and manners of society with regard to the possibilities of change and growth which is the deepest threat to the well-being of society. It is this skepticism which dims the young's social intelligence and makes them conformists. The great majority of youth are only too well educated by the power of the prevailing institutions in society; they have lost the capacity to see visions and dream dreams.

It was not the loss within the individual's personal life exacted by conformity which disturbed Coe; he was concerned about conformism among the young primarily because it represented a loss to society of a source of renewal. Youth who are not socially creative, he wrote, "do not support the society of which they are a part [and] . . . they rob it of its power to renew itself."[48] It is the social function of youth to renew society in a peaceful, gradual fashion in each generation and thereby preserve it from violent revolution.

The unique religious function of youth derived also from this social function. The appropriate symbol for God in the modern age was no longer an old man but perpetual youth. "The heart of the matter," he wrote, "is God with us--God, the ever-youthful, summoning us perpetually to create new earths."[49] Youth, he predicted, "will find God within everything--study, occupation, play, worship, the championship of unpopular causes--

that makes for unprecedented good."[50] The innovative creativity of youth, he concluded, is "the normal and proper organ for the self-revelation of God."[51]

Coe believed that schools, if deliberately designed to help the young respond to the conditions of their emerging society, could increase the number of critical youth and decrease the number of those who "rashly" conformed to the status quo. But he recognized that while schools could be a source of renewal, they were also a part of the problem of conformism. He admitted that the development of a socially relevant curriculum for public schools was frustrated by the belief still prevalent among educators that teaching is something done by the teacher to the student rather than a conjoint activity. Further, curriculum designed to assist youth in living in society was dependent for its effectiveness upon teachers who were themselves responsive to the genuinely new in modern culture. But such teachers required the broadest possible academic preparation. Coe argued that the promise of a fully professional education of the teacher, so bright at the beginning of the century, degenerated into a narrow specialization by the mid-twenties. The dependence of American colleges and universities upon the business culture of the nation further hindered their ability to assist youth in the development of a critique of American industry. Lastly, Coe argued that the public school curriculum was failing to permit the growth of social intelligence among the young because the schools themselves taught an uncritical veneration of "the modern nationalistic state."[52]

Beginning with Motives of Men, Coe focused his attention on "the dark side" of the state as educator; he was prescient in his perception that the monopoly of the modern state in education was a potential danger. He acknowledged that state control of education in the modern period freed the schools from many repressive limits imposed by religious authoritarianism when the church was supreme in education. However, he argued that religious institutions in the contemporary state might serve the prophetic function of defining the limits of political control in education. His full discussion of this problem in Education for Citizenship still has value because of the subtlety with which he explored the relationship between the state and religious institutions in the process of revaluation of values and the reconstruction of social institutions. Again, it was his sensitivity to the teaching role of religious institutions, his concern with nurture within the family, and his commitment to the continuing revaluing of experience which led him to be wary of the assumption that any one institution could safely be intrusted with the responsibility for public enlightenment.

In Motives of Men, published when he was sixty-six, he continued his perceptive interpretation of contemporary culture. Commenting on the excesses of youth in the age of the flivver, the flapper and the hip flask, Coe asked: "Does any fever of modern youth reach a higher temperature than automobilitis among parents?"[53] Still an ardent champion of women, he urged anyone concerned about their adulation of Valentino to consider first the adulation of Coolidge among mature men.

Coe was prompted to write Motives of Men by his conviction that "a spiritual depression" had settled upon America by the close of the twenties. "A growing disillusionment with respect to himself," he wrote, "creeps upon twentieth century man."[54] Twentieth century culture itself was generating a deep skepticism about the human condition. Psychology, literature and theology were painting a picture of man as an irrational being, driven by instinctive and social forces beyond his control. Capitalism's insistence that all human activity was tied to the profit motive dehumanized men and women even more effectively than did the assembly line methods of modern industry. Traditional Christian teaching of the depravity of human nature further demeaned man in his own eyes.

Coe described Motives of Men as a "partly technical but mostly untechnical" discussion of the mass of current opinion regarding human nature.[55] He acknowledged that he worked with "any critical apparatus that he could lay his hands upon" and he did not scruple "to mingle side by side considerations drawn from psychology, biology, current history, education and common experience."[56] Further, he asserted that he used "good" and "bad," "high" and "low" as valuational terms taking for granted that they have objective meaning. He adopted what he called "the generally accepted criterion" that the good includes social satisfactions and cannot be limited to "egotistical satisfactions." The social welfare which enters into the definition of the good included "not only physical well-being, but also the increase of knowledge, beauty and communication and fellowship among the greatest number of people."[57]

Coe criticized the child study movement and the influence of G. Stanley Hall because they both focused upon the irrational--even the animalistic in child life--and overlooked the rational. He argued that the culture epoch theory popularized by Hall described childhood as "a genuine savagery."[58] He rejected any psychology which taught that social and rational drives appear only at adolescence and are consolidated in adulthood, maintaining, as he had since 1904, that the growth of rationality is continuous throughout life. He recognized that Freudian psychology, too, gave great support to those who wished to undermine faith in the rational possibilities of human beings. Coe, however, pointed his readers toward a more positive interpretation of Freudianism. He declared that as a result of Freud's work, neuroticism could no longer be perceived as a fated tragedy or a sinful weakness of character. It was the best adjustment to a situation creating enormous stress which an individual could make. Coe described psychoanalysis as a shared process of rational reflection upon the original adjustment achieved and a search for a more adequate adjustment in the present.

Coe asserted, however, that the Freudian emphasis upon the unconscious overlooked the role of habit governing all human conduct. Freud's theory of the unconscious diverted many from the social setting which provided even the neurotic with

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models for behavior. "The configuration of drives," he wrote, "in any one individual owes more to habit and training"[59] than to the sex instinct or the unconscious.

Coe returned to Thorndike's "original tendencies of the original tendencies" as a more adequate understanding of the basic drives of men and women. It is the "original tendency" of humans to repeat experiences, to form habits, to organize experiences; and all of these, he argued, contained within themselves the ability to criticize the self. Asserting that "we can take an interest in almost anything," he maintained that the drives of human beings express an almost infinite variety.[60] He approved the assertion of John B. Watson that humans can acquire any qualities from those that make a monk to those that make a monster. He argued that instinct theory by itself explains very little; it is the name of a class of responses and gives us very little insight into the nature of "the motives of men." Coe's openness to behaviorism is shown in his assertion that human beings do not "want" anything, they behave. "If you would know what they want," he wrote, "study their behavior."[61]

Coe argued that even the most seemingly passionate and uncontrollable actions of persons are dictated by elements of rationality and expressed in conformity to social precedents. Social habits check even the spontaneous expression of anger. Anger, he noted, is not expressed by the same person in the same way toward someone regarded as an inferior and someone regarded as a superior. Focusing upon the violence of racial hatred in the 20's, Coe dismissed the notion that any instinct of racial feeling was controlling conduct. He maintained that the social habits of Southern white communities sanction and control even such an "unpredictable" act of violence as a lynching. "Who is to be lynched, by whom, upon what provocation, and by what method depends upon a set of discriminated ideas already present when the provocation occurs."[62] He described a lynching reported to him by an acquaintance. The affair began with people assembling at a pre-arranged hour; the group was led in prayer; the victim hung from a bridge, his body riddled with bullets; and then the crowd dispersed. He concluded that lynchings are not ruled by individual passion but by social traditions. This is the reason why a community can remain so unruffled following a lynching. Since lynchings are controlled by social precedents, they will be eliminated only when the conditions legitimating the precedents are studied and systematically altered. Coe argued that racial theory explained little and falsely gave an impression that certain human actions and aversions were unmodifiable. However, he maintained that a concept of social habituation explained much and pointed the reformer in the direction of effective social change.

Just as Coe rejected instinct theory which he believed limited the possibility and scope of the control of reason in life, he rejected, too, the traditional Christian teaching that some irremediable evil flawed the human condition. "Evil," he wrote, "is misplaced good";[63] hence, the appropriate attitude toward evil is an educative not a punitive attitude. The Christian doctrine of original sin was an a priori assertion; it was not a conclusion based upon empirical evidence. He argued that the doctrine should be replaced by a psychological approach to "wrong doing." Much wrongdoing, he believed, was due to such physical causes as lack of food, sleep or adequate care. Wrongdoing often arose from simple imitation of others and then became habitual. But even as wrongdoing was often embedded in habits, the conditions under which those habits were formed could be isolated and the conditions favorable to new habit formations described. He believed that Christians should not focus their attention on sin, but should study instead the conditions in the environment which shaped behavior. He agreed perfectly with the analysis of Rauschenbusch that the source of all evil was society. "The permanent vices and crimes of adults," wrote Rauschenbusch

> are not transmitted by heredity, but by being socialized . . . Just as syphilitic corruption is forced on the helpless foetus in its mother's womb, so these hereditary social evils are forced on the individual embedded in the womb of society and drawing his ideas, moral standards, and spiritual ideals from the general life of the social body.[64]

It was, of course, Coe's recognition that sin was a social experience which led him to assert that any experience of salvation must be a social experience.

Thus in discussing "the motives of men," Coe gave priority to the social milieu in which an individual was raised and the social power of habit rather than to instinct theory,

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or Freudianism or the Christian doctrine of original sin. He was skeptical, too, of the psychological testing movement which was gaining prominence in the late twenties. He rejected the notion that the tests available to psychologists at that time permitted the conclusion that intelligence was correlated with social success or that the possession of intelligence justified the existence of social, political or economic elites. Coe believed that the results of the testing movement to date established a "tendency" toward bunching of desirable and undesirable traits. He sharply denounced the supposed correlation between I. Q. and success under the conditions of modern capitalism. He called for further research into the kind of intelligence that successful men of business employed. Was it, he wanted to know, intelligence based on possession of force, capacity for fraud or ability to conciliate? Coe hazarded the guess that "truly efficient love of one another may yet turn out to be the supremely satisfying accompaniment of the highest intelligence."[65]

In the three books written while he was at Teachers College, Coe revealed a remarkable steadiness of outlook. His faith in human rationality was undimmed. He fought against all theories--whether new and "scientific" like Freudianism or ancient and authoritarian like original sin--which discredited the human capacity for disinterested and intelligent purpose. In a time of widespread racial prejudice, he revealed a truly impartial attitude toward persons. His writing is singularly free from racial bias of any kind, although it does reveal him to be a man of his own time in one respect at least. He is concerned with the problem of how to integrate immigrants into the cultural life of the nation, but references to blacks are almost absent from his writing.[66] They are the "invisible" minority, but when he did refer to them he emphasized that the racial problem is a white man's problem and is not one created by the attitudes and actions of blacks. His social psychological understanding of selfhood kept him from any adulation of the exemplars of his age, the successful businessmen, while sensitizing him to the needs of women, youth and ethnics long before the politics of the 1960's made these groups a powerful constituency. Although a middle class Protestant, he showed great openness toward minorities barred from the center of establishment power.[67] It is a free but still faithful translation of his writings to say that he recommended that all minorities be counted in and the sooner the better. Coe's conviction, first expressed in 1900, that religion imposed the obligation to be socially intelligent and compassionate, continued to dominate his writing throughout the 1920's.

In 1927 when Coe retired from Teachers College, the Religious Education Association honored him in the pages of its journal, Religious Education. A special section of the April 1927 issue, "'School's Out' for George Albert Coe," carried tributes to him from students and associates at Teachers College.[68] The next year when the Religious Education Association celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, he was pre-eminent among those recognized as the band of "far seeing pioneers" who created the Association in 1903.[69]

Harper's original plan for the Religious Education Association was vaster than anything the Association realized in its first quarter century. His high hopes for a national reform movement in religious education which would have revitalized instruction in the family, the church school and the public school--not to mention the colleges and seminaries--never materialized. The Chicago headquarters of the Association which was to have been a great clearing house of research information and the center for experimentation in religious education was for most of the period staffed by one professional only. Harper's sudden death in 1906, following so soon after the first national conference, left the Association without its most famous advocate and without the support of a leader whose reputation might have won for it firm financial backing. But despite these limitations, the Association maintained a fairly constant membership of two thousand during its first quarter century and published a monthly journal regularly after 1906.[70]

Coe contributed an article to the issue of Religious Education commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Association.[71] He surveyed the religious education movement to identify the "burning issues" of the early period and also to draw attention to the issues he saw smoldering beneath the outward successes of the movement. In 1928 Coe assumed--even as he had in his address of 1903--that moral and religious development are an intrinsic part of a complete education. He maintained that the religious education movement was a movement which completed the secular education of the school. It was the process by which the social, political and economic values of the public school were transvalued and given religious quality. For Coe, Christianity was clearly the inspiration for religious education, but religion education was a process by which Christianity itself was to be sifted and refined. He believed that the union of religion and education in religious education could only be effected by the incorporation of the perspective and the assured results of modern science within the movement. He argued that making peace with modern science involved the development of a new kind of control within religious life. Religious development was no longer conceived as a development under divine control; it was a development which could come under the control of a deliberately planned system of education. Coe acknowledged that a negative critic's comment that religious education sought to substitute education for conversion was an accurate assessment of the movement.

Coe summed up the following outpost positions which the Association secured in the years since 1903: the relevance of the general laws of learning to religious education; graduation of material; inclusion of extra-biblical material into the Sunday school curriculum; the adoption of the principles of pupil activity and pupil initiative in the development of curriculum; and professional standards of training and competence for religious educators. But while he saw these outposts overtaken, he argued that religious educators had not yet attacked authoritarianism, the main citadel of traditional religion. Authoritarianism would be effectively challenged only when the following conditions were met: (1) when the spirit and method of science become regulative in religious education; (2) when ethical values come to the foreground in religion; and (3) when social values provide the tests by which effective religious education is measured.

He argued that even such a seemingly modest innovation as the introduction of a graded series of lessons when examined closely raised the smoldering issue of the place of science in religion. Was psychology to be allowed to determine the interests of the child by empirical methods of study? Were these natural interests to control the content and sequence of religious education? Graded lessons were more than "the merest common sense condition" of efficient instruction;[72] they were, he argued, a challenge to the Bible as a sufficient system of doctrine. Coe acknowledged that those who saw in graded lessons an opening for modernism within the church were not altogether wrong. Graded lessons challenged the supremacy of the Bible and brought current events, biography and historical studies into the church school. A graded course of study meant that "we take the Bible and our beliefs to pieces in order to judge the character values of their respective parts."[73] It meant that a standard which came from within the modern field of psychological study was challenging the traditional place of the Bible in Christian teaching.

Further, Coe argued that the whole thrust of Western thought lay in the direction of an ethical interpretation of religion. He argued that ethical standards must control the selection and use of various portions of the Bible, but he emphasized that ethical standards themselves could no longer be determined apart from scientific study and analysis. Coe argued that just as habits formed character in the individual so social habits shaped morality in society. The study of the consequences of habits in both the individual and society and the conditions under which new habits could be formed and maintained was a study requiring the cooperative efforts of psychologists, sociologists, historians and educators.[74]

Coe declared that the gradation of material according to the interest of the pupils, the selection of material according to ethical standards and the development of deliberate character education represented not only a reform within Christian education but a reform within the Christian faith itself. By challenging the authority and content of traditional Christian teaching, religious education was redefining Christianity.

Lastly, he wrote that "the main use and meaning of any vital and growing religion lies at the precarious edge"[75] of civilization. The education of the young must concern itself with the unsolved problems of society more than with the transmission of the achieved results of that culture. Coe argued that both the industrial organization of modern capitalism and the political organization of the nation state grew up "outside of all reflective consciousness of life's real and abiding values and possibilities."[76] Hence he believed that Christianity or, as he put it, "any religion which assumes to judge the whole of life"--must live in tension with both capitalism and nationalism. Vigorous religion must undertake "to convert our industrial and political order into a thing of spiritual significance."[77]

He declared that the main instrument by which the modern state and the industrial order justify themselves is the public school. The ethics of the modern nation state and industrialism are embedded in the school. Hence Coe asserted that the controversy between religion and the secular order was basically an educational problem. The nation state did not have within itself the ethical sovereignty which could make it an adequate standard for character development, nor did the economic order provide an adequate standard for social education. Only a religious education which sought to unify and intensify all values could provide a standard by which character could be judged outside of the prevailing patterns of the good and the useful.

For Coe, as we have seen, religion was a process of valuation and religious education was the means by which ongoing valuation could be brought under deliberate, purposeful control. Hence for Coe the process by which political and economic values were revalued was fundamentally a process of religious education. His functional definition of religion permitted him, even compelled him, to look at the process of all value change as religious. Thus religious education based upon a functional definition of religion, an ethical interpretation of Christianity and a social psychological view of selfhood became the instrument for both individual and social reform.

Coe believed that religious education was a more inclusive process than general or public education. Unless religious education transformed the significance of the content, attitudes and skills learned in the public school, youth were being denied an education; they were merely being indoctrinated. To be truly educative, the public schools must not only transmit the culture of the past to the young, they must engage the young in the critical reappraisal of the transmitted culture. But whenever the process of critical reflection led to revaluation of values, it became religious education. Hence, for Coe, as Dewey once phrased it, "any education fit to be" was indeed, at bottom, religious education. Since religious education was quite simply the process by which values were both preserved and transformed, it had to intersect with general education at many points if either were to be effectively educative.

Even as he opposed dogma and authoritarianism in religion as an illegitimate attempt to limit and predetermine the process of valuation, so also Coe opposed those forces which he believed limited and distorted the process of revaluation in public education. Beginning in the 1920's and continuing until his death, he became an outspoken opponent of nationalism and industrialism as he saw them operating within secular education to limit the critical examination of key political and economic values. He attacked nationalism chiefly at the point of militarism in the schools and he attacked industrialism chiefly in the form of capitalism.[78]

This radicalism was not a vagary of Coe's later life. The very root processes of his thinking which supported his commitment to religious education also fed his radical social critique. Certainly his functional definition of religion freed him from the identification of religion with any established values. Coe fully acknowledged his own radical tendencies; he said at the dinner honoring his retirement from Teachers College that he found himself to be most "right" when leaning most to the "left."[79]

Throughout the twenties, Coe's style became progressively more simple and limpid. His earlier prose was saturated with the phrases of traditional piety and especially in the privately printed memorial to his wife, Coe poured out the phrases and sentiments of his Victorian boyhood. What Ails Our Youth?, however, written when he was past sixty, reflects the lean style of a newspaper reporter and the freshness of a much younger man. But, however much the language of piety dropped away from his writing in the twenties, his fundamental moral perspective remained. It was characteristic of him that when he got around to Marx, it was Marx as a moral force which fascinated him. He wrote a friend in 1934 that he was planning to do a piece of philosophizing that was aware of Karl Marx, but, unfortunately, the projected work was not written. No where in his writing did Coe systematically explore Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism. However, by the thirties he was identifying the ethical core of Christianity with the ethical core of Marxism.

Since Coe emphasized in all his writings the importance of economic conditions upon the quality of life, it is difficult to mark precisely the point at which this social Christian perspective became Marxist. In 1900, in his first book, he argued that it was the failure of organized religion to check the great injustices of the economic system which threatened "the spiritual life" of persons. His 1917 study, A Social Theory of Religious Education, was an explicit exploration of the effect of social and economic conditions upon family life and the practice of religious nurture. But in Motives of Men, written ten years later, the tone is more explicity Marxist. He wrote that the main outcome of modern industry is the character of the men and women it creates. Many led truncated lives under capitalism because they were alienated from the product which embodied their labor and intelligence and were related to the economic order only through profits or wages. Coe underscored the primacy of economic activity for the production of character in these words:

> to say that we are engaged in making goods and not men is . . . simply not so. We actually do make men of one sort or another in all our sowing and reaping,

> mining and smelting, manufacture, commerce and finance. For better or worse, this is so; there is no escaping it.[80]

However, as late as 1940, Coe located the sources for his emphasis upon the kinship between the economic and the spiritual in Hebrew psychology and biblical prophecy, not Marxist theory. He argued that the Bible knows nothing about a break between the natural and spiritual life of persons; it recognizes no conflict between worship and work, or ritual and eating. Dewey, he noted, might deny dualism on the basis of instrumentalism, but for him dualism was overcome in the biblical legacy to Western civilization. Jewish-Christian religiousness, he declared, was characteristically a religiousness which emphasized that persons were created by the quality of the communal life they shared while dualism was "a fundamentally irreligious mode of thought."[82] It was the critical historical method of Bible study which he had learned in his seminary days which enabled Coe to perceive the prophetic tradition of the Old and New Testaments in a way which overcome the dualism which Greek metaphysics brought into the Christian tradition. While he recognized that most still found in their Bible a doctrine of individual salvation, he consistently interpreted it as a book of social ethics. He obviously enjoyed an anecdote about the Bible's social radicalism which he incorporated into The Motives of Men. Upton Sinclair, he wrote

> trapped a ministers' meeting by reading a fresh translation of the denunciation of rich men in the Epistle of James and attributing the words to Emma Goldman. Most of the ministers thought that such utterances justified putting her into prison.[83]

The individual, familial, pietistic gospel which so many Protestants equated with Bible faith was completely superseded for Coe by the organic, social, prophetic gospel which he perceived there. He maintained that "the old time religion" of individual salvation was the innovation of a shallow nineteenth century evangelism; the really old biblical revelation called for both social judgment and social salvation. Modern biblical scholarship uncovered the social dimension of biblical religion; and this scholarship in turn rested upon the development of a new concept in historical studies. "The new history," Coe wrote

> employing the polarizing lenses of psychology, reveals everywhere and at all periods unbroken continuity between on the one hand, men's daily occupation of transforming raw materials, of getting and spending, of buying and selling, of employing and being employed, and, on the other hand, the substance of the social life and of the political order, literature and the fine arts, religion, science and philosophy.[84]

But if the Christian tradition, contained in the Bible, offered a corrective to a dualism which negated the importance of social and economic conditions for the spiritual life, it also contained in the doctrine of original sin a support for some of the worst features of capitalism. Christianity, he argued, was "the garden plot" from which classical economic theory took its view of man. "The teachings of official Christianity," he declared

> have given strength and plausibility to the motives which modern industrialism teaches are the mainsprings of human action. Christianity has taught that the heart of man is desperately wicked; that it is selfish,

> sensual, and self-deceived; and that it is incapable of reforming itself without an infusion of divine power. These can be matched with the view of human nature that it is lazy and indulgent and only activated to industry by the whip lash of necessity.[85]

The great weakness of the prevailing interpretation of conversion was that rather than rebuke the motives which laissez-faire economics attributed to persons, it further discredited human motivation. However, Coe declared that conversion, if rightly understood, paid the highest compliment to human motives. Conversion implied the necessity and the ability of persons to turn toward the better; it was a direct challenge to the interpretation of human nature embedded in classical economics. Like one of the Nazarites of his boyhood, he argued that no one could become a Christian and not repudiate the values of the existing social and economic order.

Coe wrote that if it were to survive as a theory in modern culture, regeneration had to be based upon a perceived alternative to the economic definition of man in capitalism. He outlined three conditions necessary to a contemporary understanding of regeneration: first, evidence of contrast in the daily habits of the regenerate and unregenerate; second, exhibition of a church clearly distinguishable from all other institutions in its dedication to nurturing the highest motives of persons; and third, demonstration of the reversal of evil habits in individuals and groups within society.

In this way, conversion, the subject of his first book, re-entered his last writings as he became more and more concerned with social change. Although one student of Coe's use of the concept of conversion argued that in his later work the concept was completely swallowed up in the concept of growth, it would be more accurate to say that the concept of conversion was transferred from the individual to society.[86] Although Coe emphasized continuous growth in the individual, he defined social growth as saltatory. He maintained that the highest kind of social intelligence was necessary to resolve the inicquities of modern capitalist society before they led to revolution. He believed that a truly converted church could support a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the larger society and he urged the church to point the way by which "the kingdom of property, profits, wealth and wages" could be transformed into the Kingdom of God.[87]

As individual conversion disappeared from his writing, the possibility of social regeneration gained increasing dominance. His emphasis upon temperamental readiness for conversion as well as his insistence on the importance of social habituation in his social psychology made him a critic of conversion as defined by evangelical Protestantism. At the same time, however, it could be argued that he turned religious education itself into an instrument of conversion: it became a process for the conversion of all values into ever more socially inclusive values. Evangelical Protestantism defined conversion as the divinely initiated act by which an individual was transformed; while Coe identified it with religious education, a deliberative process by which society itself could be

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reformed. Religious education enabled persons to transform the values of their society and, ultimately, re-form both society and their own character. Religious education was, indeed, evangelicalism shorn of dogma and mysticism; for, at its center, was the good news that life could be renewed. It was his interpretation of religious education in this broad sense which led him directly to Marxism. He valued Marxism because it, too, proclaimed the good news that society could be transformed and that the transformation was in the direction of the enhancement of personal and social good.[88] Coe's Marxism was the direct continuation of his social Christianity, for it was an extension of his belief in social regeneration. It was the political expression of what he meant by religious education.

Coe's Marxism modified his idealism even further than it was already modified by pragmatism. However, he always maintained that the thrust of mind after value was independent of all economic conditions. On this point, he remained closer to his functional psychology of 1919 than to orthodox Marxism. And, although Marxism also modified his original personalism, it is equally true to say that his commitment to personhood modified his Marxism.

Increasingly as he grew older, he acknowledged the difficulties in the way of a personalistic understanding of the universe. Personal selves, he wrote, are a part of nature; they are a part of evolutionary development and must be conceived as a cosmic event.[89] However, he acknowledged that nature was not unambiguous on this point. The stellar universe was vast and personality and the range of the personal were restricted even on planet earth; and, further, the concept of culmination was inapplicable to biologic processes as such. Therefore, he concluded that it is not possible to say that evolution culminates in personality. However Coe still maintained that the difficulties in the way of a personalistic interpretation of reality were not unsurmountable. Whatever evil, failure or defeat constricts personhood, it is still characteristic of persons that they reach out after as yet unrealized personal good. There is a constant renewing of our understanding of the good; so that, as Coe put it, we are always in the strange position of repenting of our good.

He believed that God was immanent in all choices of the good that lead toward expanding personhood. He wrote that God is revealed "in all choices of ours that make us personal and still more personal."[90] He defined God as "interfused personality" in 1929,[91] and, although increasingly after that the concept of God became ever more attenuated as it was submerged in the process of valuation, he never repudiated it. In his last book, he admitted that doctrinnaire Marxists would denounce him for his latent affirmation of personal deity.[92]

He argued that the evidence of human choosing indicated a divine being within and at the end of the historical process. The immanent God, he wrote:

> takes the form of a choice within our choices, is . . . a personal being; and . . . this being, in that he realizes himself by promoting our self-realization in

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> a society of persons, is ethical in the profoundest sense.[93]

Thus, despite his scientific caution when it came to the judgment that personality is the culmination of evolution, he still wrote that "the flower that is the free person"[94] is the meaning of the whole natural and historical process. He believed that modern psychology was pointing toward a model of consciousness in which the personal self shaped experiences into meaningful patterns and was not simply a medium through which experience flowed. Drawing upon this psychological model, he defined personality as the process of shaping meaning within the individual and the cosmos.[95]

This process of shaping meaning is identical in Coe's thought to the process of revaluing values. He argued that the religious conscience of each individual and the religious conscience of social groups are continually challenged, broken down and reconstituted in the process of fashioning new values from experience. In answer to the question which was the title of his last book, "what is religion doing to our conscience?," Coe wrote that religion in the process of transforming our valuations was continually judging and re-creating our individual and collective conscience. But, while his earlier books interpreted the valuation process as one in which individual reflection and purposefulness were primary, his last book emphasized the social forces which restrict, alter or enlarge individual valuing.[96] The personalistic idealism of his first books was muted as he emphasized more and more the social sources of selfhood after 1916. As he worked out in his thought the implications of the social sources of the self, Marxist economic determinism more and more both restricted and re-defined the meaning of personal freedom to make value choices. With increasing emphasis, Coe insisted throughout the thirties and forties that economic conditions determine the valuational choices within which we both define personhood and discover the divine.[97]

In an article written in the year he died, Coe reviewed his own quest for the worthwhile in life.[98] As he looked back, he confessed that his religious conscience, undergoing many changes, still somehow remained recognizably Christian. Although his youthful search for a direct experience of God was frustrated, he affirmed that he experienced God within his experiences of value. He interpreted his whole life as a turning from authority to knowledge and from dogma to science. He, therefore, placed science first in the list of the things which he experienced as worthwhile.

In this article and frequently elsewhere in his writings, Coe defined science as a tool of intelligent love.[99] If we remember that he defined the essence of Christianity, what he once called the universally attainable in its teachings, as intelligent love, we can comprehend the central significance of science in his thought.[100] In 1951 Coe related religion and science in a way reminiscent of his personalist treatment of nearly a half century earlier in The Religion of a Mature Mind.

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Religion, since it is an attempt to understand things as they really are, is "always an exercise in intelligence." And, he argued, the scientific method defined what it meant to be intelligent in the modern world. Since he defined science as a method of evaluating experience--a definition not sharply differentiated from his definition of religion as the revaluation of experience--he frequently bordered on the reductionism that to be scientific was to be religious.

Coe enumerated five characteristics of the scientific method.[101] It involved first of all mutual discovery and evaluation of experience. Most simply put, the scientific method is "intellectual cooperation." Secondly, the scientific method is truly "classless"; it is "the democracy of the intellect." Thirdly, the scientific method nurtures in persons a greater willingness to learn than to teach; and, in this respect, he saw science as superior to organized religion. Fourthly, since the scientific method is a method of conceiving hypotheses upon the basis of observed fact, it brings into play the imagination of persons in the determination of what is real. Lastly, he emphasized that the scientific method had no orthodoxies which it must uphold. "The fellowship of scientific minds," he urged

> does not rest upon common acceptance of any conclusion whatever, but solely upon a common understanding of procedure and common appreciation of the ideals that should control it.[102]

In all these ways, the method of science supports the development of personality because it gives persons a way of interpreting the flow of their own experience. It further

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supports the autonomy of persons because it enables them to initiate their own learning and requires them to suspend judgment while relevant data are being assembled. Using the scientific method, persons become actively involved in creating meaning out of phenomena; they are not passive recipients of the learnings discovered by others. Years before, in a passage which is a beautiful example of the way in which he wove together personalism, science, and democracy with still clear evocations of the ethics of Christianity, he wrote:

> If democracy he conceived as organized respect for one another, then science, as far as it follows its own principles, is democracy in the intellectual sphere; it consists, as far as its special functions are concerned, in loving one's neighbor as oneself.[103]

Coe placed philosophy second in his list of experienced values. It was the instrument by which he confronted the universe with his questions from student days onward. Philosophy permitted him to express his religious longing in an intellectually satisfying way. Thirdly, he listed the value which he experienced through inventions. He particularly celebrated the fact that modern inventions transmuted energy into a form of power which was under human control. Fourthly, he expressed his appreciation for the value which he experienced through aesthetic enjoyment. Fifth on his list of experienced value was religious prophecy. The judgment of religious prophets always promotes "decay of our ethically uncritical piety"[104] and it always implies the promise of conversion. In this last essay he noted that conversion is always a privilege; it can be compared to the joy a researcher knows when he corrects an error in his method.

Next he listed the value he experienced as he participated in the struggle to protect the civil liberties of social dissidents. Seventh, he recalled the growth he experienced as he identified with those who were in prison because of society's fear of its own best prophets. He confessed that the smoothness of his own life humbled him when he compared it to the persecution meted our to so many whose social judgment and aspirations he shared. He remembered next the social value which his life long identification with the struggles of labor brought into his life.

He experienced value and the transvaluation of value, too, in his responsiveness to "the mysticism of the love of Jesus." The purity and centrality of love in the teaching of Jesus was a continuing source of ethical inspiration for him. Lastly, he wrote of his marriage and the joy and fulfillment of personality which it brought him. If he never directly experienced God, he believed nonetheless that he communed with him in the social, intellectual and aesthetic values which enriched his life.

He wrote this essay as a Christmas greeting to friends when he was eighty-eight. He died in 1951, just four months short of his eighty-ninth birthday, at a time when the temper of the country was becoming increasingly conservative.

At the end of his life he was an old liberal in what seemed to be a post-liberal age; but now, a quarter of a century later, the theological positions and social conditions which made him "dated" in 1951 have themselves been so altered that it is possible to look at his life afresh. He wrote once that he had endeavored to think his moral life through in common terms. He believed that certain of the root concepts which he incorporated into his thought--such as science as a method of intelligence, democracy as a process, and personality as value--must be incorporated into any modern philosophy. Like Augustine who embraced the legacy of the seven liberal arts in the confidence that the truth "wherever it is found" cannot be in contradiction to "the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ,"[105] Coe could embrace the truth in the new sciences emerging at the end of the nineteenth century--the new psychology, the new history, the new education--with confidence that they could not contradict any fundamental Christian truth. If he was willing to psychologize and socialize Christianity, it was because he first learned from Christianity the importance of both experiencing faith and relating it to social life.

Jacques Ellul once summed up the disabilities under which he labored as a social critic. He wrote that his work revealed his limitations and betrayed him for what he was:

> a teacher (abomination), a bourgeois (who isn't?), uncommitted (i.e., not actively engaged in politics), and I might add, if it were not so difficult to say about oneself, a Christian (what a reference!).[106]

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All these limitations apply equally to Coe. His intellectual biography points up especially Ellul's last parenthetical remark. What a reference, indeed, is being a Christian today and Coe's own career has helped to make the designation "Christian" an even more problematic reference. However, whatever Christianity may mean for today and the future, it can only express itself in the modern world after it has passed through a rigorous reformulation such as that to which Coe and his generation submitted it.

Coe once wrote that any individual is an incorporation of group sentiments and he himself well typified the group sentiments of liberal Protestantism. He is a link to a whole theological generation whose history illustrates his conclusion that the Christian conscience by virtue of changes in the secular culture undergoes many transformations and yet somehow remains recognizably Christian. His intellectual pilgrimage permits us to trace how many in the Protestant community, especially those in the religious education movement, assimilated the root ideas of science and the social sciences as they knew them and permitted them to refashion their theology. Like many of his gernation, it was his educational experiences which freed him from dogmatic and mystical Christianity. Having experienced themselves the revaluation of all their values, Coe and his contemporaries sought to place this valuational process at the center of all education.[107]

If we accept the interpretation of the sociologist of religion, Peter Berger, that liberalism represented the long term trend in religious development and neo-orthodoxy only a temporary interruption, then the service which neo-orthodoxy performed in resisting liberalism after World War I is highlighted. Neo-orthodoxy detached the Christian tradition, not from history or the empirical social sciences, but from the rational-historical categories of nineteenth century scholarship into which liberalism had submerged it.[108]

Although the thoroughness with which Coe pursued the meaning of his own experience of "salvation by education" is admirable, the reductionism of his mature thought is unsettling. Was the reduction of religion, science and education severally and collectively to an evaluative process a hint of his genius or his shallowness as a thinker? Was the intellectual vision by which religion, science and democracy were all reduced to a process of evaluation a Thomistic one in its comprehensiveness or was it merely a surrender of all intellectual rigor before the historicism of nineteenth century culture?[109] Or may the simplicity of his later books be the product of a profound intellectual playfulness which, as Hofstadter has suggested, is the accompaniment of profound intellectual piety?[110] A balanced assessment may be that the functional reductionism of Coe's thought was the consequence of his own intellectual perspicacity, but when taken over by lesser minds it led the religious education to the verge of intellectual bankruptcy.[111]

Earlier in this chapter questions were raised concerning the estimate to be placed on Coe's social and educational

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prescriptions during the last thirty years of his life. Robert W. Lynn, on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, recently concluded that Coe took a radical position on every social issue.[112] Throughout the twenties he showed complete freedom from the nativist prejudice which then was rampant throughout the nation. He challenged the values of America's business culture during its heyday under the Harding and Coolidge administrations. He always championed labor against the dehumanizing values and practices of capitalism. He early perceived the significance of what is now termed "the youth culture." He perceived, too, the social significance of greater liberation for women and interpreted the new awareness of the full personhood of women as a revaluation of former sexual values which was religious in quality.

He was critical of American public education only at the point where he believed it placed democratic values second to political expediency and social conformity. His social psychological perspective led him to accept cautiously the educational testing movement of the 1920's, but he repudiated all claims to elitism based upon intelligence alone.

Not even the conservative reaction following the Second World War deterred him from moving steadily in the direction of even greater social radicalism. Perhaps only at the point of his endorsement of Stalinism did Coe's social insight fail. Yet, given the violence of the fascist right in the 1930's and 40's, perhaps his public support of socialism even in Stalinist

Russia is an indication of his courage, if not his vision. Coe was slow to see the destructiveness of new forms of intellectual tyranny in modern totalitarianism, however. His liberalism was rooted in American Methodism and American philosophy and he was so completely removed from European intellectual developments that Fascism and Marxism were almost outside his intellectual comprehension. He responded to Marxism as an extension of the American Social Gospel movement, but he was unable to make a firm distinction between it and Stalinism. This failure not only flawed his social philosophy at a time when a theologian like Reinhold Niebuhr was hailed as a prophet precisely because he could make such a distinction, but it made it easy for many to dismiss his substantial psychological and social contributions to religious education as socialistic or communistic.[113]

Ironically, other critics, condemning excessive individualism and subjectivity in religious education as practiced within the Protestant denominations, attacked the personalist emphasis in Coe's thought as the causal factor. These critics overlooked the fact that Coe's chief contribution to the movement was his analysis of religious education from a social and scientific point of view. Coe's social psychology, his ethical interpretation of Christianity, his critique of mysticism, his functional view of religion and his economic determinism all should have turned religious education resolutely away from an emphasis upon narrow individualism and religious subjectivity.

If his influence did not, it must be that forces other than those deriving from the intellectual legacy of "the father of the religious education movement" worked their will upon the movement.

As often happens when intellectual patterns of thought are going out of fashion, the exponents of the newly forming point of view attack their predecessors by ascribing to their intellectual system responsibility for discredited social conditions or institutions. Coe himself fell into this trap when he attributed all that was destructive in modern culture to the classical theological doctrines of Christianity. His critics followed the same strategy making a causal connection between his intellectual system and the moral ambiguities of mid-twentieth century American culture and forgetting that for thirty years he bore a prophetic witness against that same culture.

Dewey developed a social theory of education fully responsive to the claims of democracy and science and only late and briefly discussed "the common faith" lying below his philosophy. He recognized that given the dependence of each of us upon nature and one another, a "natural piety" became the educated person. Coe's legacy reversed Dewey's: he spent his long life examining the nature of "the common faith" which could sustain the experienced values of science and democracy. Increasingly, we are learning from anthropology and studies in comparative religion the importance of the depth dimension of religion in a people's culture. By participating in the transformation of the symbols of Protestantism, Coe may have made an even more radical contribution to "the transformation of American education" than did the educational progressives led by Dewey. Coe inspired three generations of religious educators to develop patterns of nurture in liberal Protestant churches which would engage youth in a deliberate revaluation of social, economic, and political values. He defined religious education ultimately as the process by which intelligent love guided the formation of all valuations. In any educational history of the American people the biography of so significant a Protestant educator as George A. Coe deserves a place.[114]

One historian wrote that Protestants figured so prominently in the progressive movement that progressivism could be considered as a phase in the history of the development of the Protestant conscience. He even called progressivism "a latter-day Protestant revival."[115] Tracing the intellectual development of Coe, we can see that for him, at any rate, liberalism and progressivism grew directly out of his experience of the meaning of Christianity. He travelled a road from the evangelical piety of the Western New York frontier to the intellectual Marxism of "the social frontier." The distance he travelled did not diminish his confidence that in his experience of noetic, social and ethical values he was communing with the divine in the only mode open to "a mature mind."

CHAPTER VI FOOTNOTES

1. White, Social Thought in America, p. 247.

2. Although letters on file in the Coe collection at Yale Divinity School contain many expressions of admiration for Coe, the most available source for his impact on his generation are the two memorial issues of Religious Education: (1) "'School's Out' for George A. Coe," a special supplement to the issue of April, 1927 (XXII: 419-47); and the issue of March-April 1952 (XLVII: 67-115).

3. Reinhold Niebuhr, Beyond Tragedy: Essays on the Christian Interpretation of History (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1955) and The Irony of American History (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1952).

4. Barth rejected his earlier liberalism at the beginning of World War I and began to ground his theological reflection upon revelation and faith rather than religious experience and reason; one of his students wrote that "Barth was discovering in the Bible . . . something which liberal theology had tended to obscure, namely, the fundamental discontinuity between God and man," Karl Barth, How I Changed My Mind with an Introduction and Epilogue by John D. Godsey (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966).

5. Coe referred to the conflict between American and continental theologians on this point in "Assault Upon Liberalism," Religious Education XXXIV (April-June 1939): 85-92.

6. Reinhold Niebuhr analyzed the modern, secular view of mankind in The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation.

7. See Allen Oscar Hansen, Liberalism and American Education in the Eighteenth Century with an Introduction by Edward H. Reisner (New York: Macmillan, 1926).

8. See Coe's 1904 essay, "The Philosophy of the Movement for Religious Education," discussed in Chapter I.

9. John D. Godsey, the editor of Barth's How I Changed My Mind, wrote of Barth's Commentary on Romans that it pushed aside all the mainstays of liberal theology--religious experience, religious individualism, historical relativism and the voice of conscience. Commenting upon Barth's theology, he wrote: "The righteousness of God in the full terror of its

judgment and the overwhelming joy of its mercy, is brought to bear upon this world. God is God, and he has wrought salvation! With this message Karl Barth's Romerbrief, as Karl Adam so aptly put it, landed like a bombshell in the playground of the theologians," pp. 24-25.

10. See Chap. 1, "The Agrarian Myth and Commercial Realities," in Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform.

11. Ibid., p. 166.

12. Hopkins' study, Rise of the Social Gospel, was written as a dissertation under H. Richard Hiebuhr at Yale; first published in 1940, a new issue was published in 1967. Another seminal study, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, by Henry Farnham May was written as a dissertation under A. M. Schlesinger of Harvard; published in 1949, May's work traces the Social Gospel movement in the context of the period's whole social history.

13. Hofstadter, Age of Reform, p. 270.

14. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, identified the period from 1876 to 1917 as the period of progressive impulse in American education and the period from 1917 to the mid-fifties as the period of institutionalization.

15. See Chap. 5, "The Completion of the Urban Network, 1860-1900," in Charles N. Glaab and A. Theodore Brown, A History of Urban America (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

16. Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order, 1877-1920 (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

17. See Chap. 7, "The New Sociology and Economics and the Social Gospel," Weisenburger, Ordeal of Faith: The Crisis of Church-Going America, 1865-1900.

18. Charles Horton Cooley published Social Organization in 1909; Morton and Lucia White noted Dewey's dependence on Cooley for his social analysis, The Intellectual Versus the City: From Thomas Jefferson to F. Lloyd Wright (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). Cooley himself did not use the phrase "secondary group" for the more structured relationship.

19. Handy, The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920: Gladden, Ely, Rauschenbusch and Chap. 4, "The Social Nature of the Natural Man: Dewey, Cooley, Rauschenbusch," in David W. Noble, The Progressive Mind: 1890-1917 (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1970).

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20. Hofstadter, Social Darwinism, Chap. 6, "The Dissenters."

21. White, Social Thought in America, described the intellectual ferment generated by thinkers like Dewey, Veblen, Holmes, Beard and Robinson as a compound of pragmatism, institutionalism, behaviorism, legal realism, economic determinism and "the new history."

22. Eric F. Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny: A History of Modern American Reform (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1956).

23. Hofstadter argued in Age of Reform that industrialism produced a status revolution which caused many middle class professionals to lose their place of influence in society; he interpreted the influential role of ministers and professors in the progressive movement as their response to their loss of traditional prestige. Mann explored the leadership of ministers and professors in Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age: Social Reform in Boston, 1880-1900.

24. Chap. 1 of Noble's The Progressive Mind, "The Crisis of 1890: Rural Stability Versus Industrial Change," described the challenge of industrialism to American intellectuals; E. Digby Baltzell explored the dimension of the challenge of new ethnic groups in American life in The Protestant Establishment: Democracy and Caste in America (New York: Random House, 1966).

25. Herbert Croly, The Promise of American Life (New York: Macmillan, 1909), advocated centralization of state power in order to promote the general welfare.

26. Paul C. Violas, "Jane Addams and the New Liberalism," in Karier, et al., Roots of Crisis, pp. 66-83.

27. Karier, et al., Roots of Crisis.

28. Edward C. Kirkland, Industry Comes of Age: Business, Labor and Public Policy, 1860-1897 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 406.

29. James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

30. These papers are now available to researchers.

31. To a young friend, John Dorr, Coe wrote in September 1941 that Union "is not a school of the prophets," arguing that it was saturated with a historicism that denigrated the present; "How different are your judgments," he wrote, "from anything that I could possibly have entertained when I

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believed that I was to go into the ministry. No minister, at that time, could go as far as you know you must go."

32. Niebuhr published a diary of his Detroit ministry under the title, Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic (New York: Willett, Clark and Colby, 1929). See also June Bingham, Courage to Change: An Introduction to the Life and Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr (New York: Scribner's, 1961), pp. 129-139.

33. Coe, "What I Have Seen and What I Hope to See," Religious Education XXII (April 1927): 419-447.

34. Roderick Nash, in The Nervous Generation: American Thought, 1917-1930 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), wrote a perceptive bibliographic essay on the social history of the 1920's, pp. 5-32.

35. F. Scott Fitzgerald's lines from This Side of Paradise (1920) quoted by Nash, Ibid.

36. Nash noted in his Preface that his organizing concept, nervousness, "was psychological rather than intellectual, but he believed it to be a better description than 'the lost generation'"; he claimed that nervousness affected large numbers of the American public during the decade following the end of the war.

37. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 129.

38. Coe in a letter to Walter M. Horton dated January 14, 1935 in the Coe collection at Yale Divinity School.

39. Coe in his Preface to Motives of Men noted that he completed his book "in the sunshine" of Glendora, California in May 1928.

40. Coe, Law and Freedom in the School: 'Can and Cannot,' 'Must and Must Not,' 'Ought and Ought Not,' in Pupils' Projects (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924). The project method was enthusiastically adopted by many religious educators, see Erwin L. Shaver, The Project Principle in Religious Education (Chicago, 1924) and "The Use of the Project Principle in Teaching Religion," Religious Education XXI (1926): 436-471.

41. Coe, Preface, What Ails Our Youth?, p. vi.

42. Merle Curti, Social Ideas of American Educators, p. 233, referred to Coe's forthright treatment of class conflict in Education for Citizenship.

43. Completed July 31, 1924 at Coe's camp in Lonely Lake, Canada.

44. Coe, What Ails Our Youth?, p. 202.

45. Charles A. Reich, The Greening of America (New York: Random House, 1970) seems naive in his one dimensional treatment of youth compared to Coe's 1924 study.

46. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 110; Coe explored this theme in earlier articles: "Functions of Children in Community," Religious Education XIII (February 1918): 26-32 and "Nature of Discipline for Democracy," Religious Education XIV (June 1919): 136-146; both of these articles were combined in "The Functions of Childhood in Society," Religious Education XVI (February 1921): 29-36. This theme was central to his thought and his 1921 essay was reprinted in the March-April 1952 Coe memorial issue of Religious Education. In Psychology of Religion, Coe wrote "Our age is called, for example, the century of the child, because childhood has been, in a real sense, just discovered. Now this line of discovery took its start precisely in devotion to child-welfare, especially in education." Richard Hofstadter reviewed the discovery of the child in progressive thought in "The Child and the World," Daedalus XCI (Summer 1962): 501-526.

47. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 111.

48. Coe, What Ails Our Youth?, p. 90.

49. Ibid., p. 92.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 200.

54. Ibid., p. 5.

55. Ibid., Preface.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., p. vii.

58. Ibid., pp. 97-98.

59. Ibid., Chap. 11.

60. Ibid.

61. *Ibid*., Chap. 6.

62. *Ibid*., p. 182.

63. *Ibid*., p. 237.

64. Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Macmillan, 1917), p. 60. Coe in *Psychology of Religion*, p. 225, wrote that sin is conjoint and salvation must accordingly be social. He dealt with sin as a social reality in *Motives of Men*, Chap. 12, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, Chap. 13, and *What is Christian Education?*, Chap. 6.

65. Coe, *Motives of Men*, p. 91.

66. Commenting on the significance of the *Pierce* Decision striking down Oregon's compulsory public school attendance law, Coe hailed it as a decision underlining the nation's inexpungable pluralism, *Education for Citizenship*, p. 187. Rabbi Emmanuel Gamoran, director of the Jewish Education Committee in New York City and a former student of Coe's, wrote in 1952 that Coe was close to a Jewish group at Teachers College which sought to develop a philosophy of Jewish life in America. According to Gamoran, Coe frowned on the "melting pot" theory of adjustment seeing the danger of the assumption that the immigrants were to be stripped of their culture. Coe, he wrote, was fully supportive of ethnic diversity and his ideal was a truly liberal, multicolored civilization, "An Appreciation," *Religious Education* XLVII (March-April 1952): 109-110.

67. Chap. 7, "The Intellectual Counterattack on Caste: The Social Gospel, Reform and the New Social Science," in Baltzell's *The Protestant Establishment* describes the attempt of progressives like Coe to preserve standards of excellence while at the same time repudiating all forms of caste.

68. Volume XXII of *Religious Education* in a special supplement to its issue of April 1927 contains articles, speeches of appreciation and a bibliography of Coe's published work up to the time of his retirement.

69. A list of the surviving members of the 1903 national conference was published in *Religious Education* XXIII (1928): 605; among the more prominent survivors were Ames, Angell, Butler, Dewey, Horne, Starbuck and, of course, Coe.

70. Mathews, "The Inception of the Religious Education Association," *Religious Education* XXIII (1928): 619-621.

71. Coe, "Burning Issues," *Religious Education* XXIII (1928): 649-653.

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72. Ibid., p. 649.

73. Ibid., p. 649.

74. Ibid., p. 652.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ward, "We Were Friends," Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 88-91, reported briefly on Coe's social activism. Coe was Chairman of a Committee on Militarism in Education which presented a petition in 1932 to the House Military Affairs Committee urging the withdrawal of the War Department from the field of education. Other committee memberships of Coe are listed in A Compilation of Public Records: Six Thousand Educators, College, University, Theological Seminary, Vol. 1 (Cincinnati: Circuit Riders, Indiana, 1959), pp. 165-166; according to this publication Coe was a member of the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born, the American League for Peace and Democracy, the American League Against War and Fascism, the American Peace Crusade, the Citizens' Committee for Harry Bridges, the Committee for Citizenship Rights (organized to befriend eleven indicted Communist leaders), the Committee for Peaceful Alternatives to the Atlantic Pact, Educators for Wallace, and the Emergency Conference on World Peace and China. As early as 1938, he was one of the sponsors of the World Youth Congress, see Daily Worker, March 23, 1938; and, as late as February 23, 1951, he was a member of the W. E. B. DuBois Testimonial Sponsoring Committee.

79. Coe, "What I Have Seen and What I Hope to See," Religious Education XXII (April 1927): 419-447.

80. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 137.

81. Coe in a review of John Macmurray's The Clue to History in Religious Education XXXV (January-March 1940): 50-53.

82. Ibid.

83. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 187.

84. Ibid., p. 136.

85. Ibid., p. 56.

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86. Pittman's conclusion (see Chap. 4, n. 3 above) that Coe substituted the concept of growth for conversion needs to be modified; although Coe emphasized the continuity of growth in the religious life, he never entirely discarded the importance of critical turning points in any individual's development; secondly, biblical prophecy and millennialism prepared him for the Marxian emphasis upon the inevitability of crisis as society moved toward social justice.

87. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 58.

88. Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 105; Motives of Men, p. 59.

89. Coe, Chap. 5, "How We Become Persons," in What Is Christian Education? In this book written a year after he retired, Coe did not use the phrase "democracy of God" which figured so prominently in his definition of the purpose of Christian education in 1917; in 1929 he defined Christian education in personalist terms. Christian education, he wrote in his famous concluding "coda," "is the systematic, critical examination and reconstruction of relations between persons, guided by Jesus' assumption that persons are of infinite worth, and by the hypothesis of the existence of God, the Great Valuer of Persons."

90. Ibid., p. 94.

91. Ibid.

92. Concluding postscript to What Is Religion Doing To Our Conscience?

93. Coe, What Is Christian Education?, p. 94.

94. Ibid., p. 95.

95. Ibid., p. 96.

96. Coe, What Is Religion Doing To Our Conscience?

97. Coe, Motives of Men, p. 49, wrote that the conditions of modern industrial life mold persons and shape their values, but the dominant social philosophy which accompanies industrialism does not hold these conditions responsible for the shaping of human destiny. According to Social Darwinism, industrial life follows its own iron laws and the spirit of man, when it seeks support outside of the natural working of the marketplace, must find it in religion; further, the latter is defined in a way to differentiate it sharply from the industrial process.

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98. Coe, "My Search for What Is Most Worthwhile," Religious Education XLVII (March-April 1952): 170-176.

99. Coe, A Social Theory, pp. 68, 72, 80; Motives of Men, p. 237.

100. Coe, The Spiritual Life, p. 206.

101. Chap. 7, "Scientific Method A Necessary Experience of Personality," in What Is Christian Education? sums up the key points which Coe made about science as a method in many different writings; another good source is his even more passionate defense of science in "Assault Upon Liberalism."

102. Coe, What Is Christian Education?, p. 139.

103. Ibid., p. 141.

104. Coe, "My Search for What is Most Worthwhile," p. 173.

105. Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana, Bk. 11, Chap. 17, quoted in S. J. Curtis and M. E. A. Boultwood, A Short History of Educational Ideas (London: University Tutorial Press, 1966), p. 86.

106. Jacques Ellul, A Critique of the New Commonplaces trans. from the French by Helen Weaver (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), p. 8.

107. Coe wrote in A Social Theory, p. 106, that his consistent purpose was to re-think his own moral and intellectual life in common terms. In "What is Religious Education?," Religious Education XVIII (1923): 92-95, he wrote that he experienced religious education as "broadly human, progressive and unifying."

108. Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 165-166, wrote that the dominance of neo-orthodoxy in the period from the twenties to the fifties among theologians "appears as a more or less 'accidental' interruption of the over-all process of secularization, the 'accident,' of course, being the political cataclysms that brought to an end the first liberal era. The contemporary eruption of what may well be called 'neo-liberalism' thus takes up where the earlier liberalism left off, and just because of the intervening period does so in considerably more 'radical' ways."

109. H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper and Bros., 1951) explored the dimensions of faith when Christ is conceived as standing over against culture, within

culture or above culture; he popularized the Barthian judgment that liberalism transformed the Christian faith into a culture-Protestantism that could perceive the divine only within its own culture-context.

110. Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, p. 27.

111. "The Naiveté of Religious Educators," an anonymous article "by one of them," appeared in Religious Education XXIII (January 1928): 19-23.

112. Robert W. Lynn, "The Religious Educators: Their Vision of Polity and Education," Union Seminary Quarterly Review XXI (January 1966): 146-159.

113. Robert W. Lynn, "The Uses of History: An Inquiry into the History of American Religious Education," Religious Education LXVII (March-April 1972): 83-97.

114. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 232, noted that Coe contributed to the "splendid" January 1935 issue of The Social Frontier devoted to indoctrination; Curti, Social Ideas of American Educators, p. 233, quoted from Education for Citizenship; Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 907, referred to Coe but wrongly attributed to Harrison S. Eliot Coe's 1908 article, "What Does Modern Psychology Permit Us to Believe in Respect to Regeneration," n. 23.

115. Hofstadter, Age of Reform, p. 152; Hofstadter noted further that progressivism received more clerical sanction among Protestants than any other movement in American history save for abolitionism and prohibitionism.

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